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No. 255.

ROMANISM

CONTRADICTORY TO THE BIBLE

BY REV. THOMAS HARTWELL HORNE, M.A.,
AUTHOR OF THE INTRODUCTION TO THE BIBLE, ETC.

I. OF THE HOLY SCRIPTURES

1. The holy Scriptures are *a complete rule of faith.* The divinely-inspired apostle Paul affirms that the holy Scriptures "are able to make us wise unto salvation;" and that "*all* Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works." 2 Tim. 3 : 15–17.

Now, if the "man of God," or Christian minister, who is to instruct others, and to declare unto them the whole counsel of God, so far as is necessary for their attainment of salvation, be perfectly instructed for the discharge of his high and responsible office *from* the Scriptures, these must necessarily contain *all* saving truth, *all* that is needful to be known by him, and by every private Christian, in order to salvation. Compare Psalm 19 : 7, 8; Isaiah 8 : 20; 2 Peter, 1 : 19–21; John 20 : 31.

Conformably to these declarations, all Protestant churches admit of no other rule of faith and practice than the Scripture, "which containeth *all* things necessary to salvation."

Further, the Scriptures prohibit *all* additions from being made to them by any mortal. "Ye shall not *add* unto the

word which I command you." Deut. 4 : 2. "Every word of God is pure. *Add* thou *not* unto his word, lest he reprove thee, and thou be found a liar." Prov. 30 : 5, 6. "I testify unto every man that heareth the words of the prophecy of this book, If any man shall *add* unto these, God shall add unto him the plagues that are written in this book." Rev. 22 : 18.

Agreeably to these declarations of holy writ, "whatsoever is not read therein, nor may be proved thereby, is not to be required of any man that it should be believed as an article of the faith, or be thought requisite or necessary to salvation;" nor has the church a right to enforce any thing besides the Scriptures to be believed as necessary to salvation.

But the *Church of Rome*, in direct contradiction to the divine commands, *equals unwritten traditions* with the holy Scriptures, and pronounces a curse on all that do not receive those traditions. "I most steadfastly admit and embrace the apostolical and ecclesiastical traditions, with the rest of the constitutions and observations of the said church." Creed of Pius IV., Art. 13. "All saving truth is not contained in the holy Scripture, but partly in the Scripture and partly in unwritten traditions; which whosoever doth not receive, with like piety and reverence as he doth the Scriptures, is accursed." Concil. Trident. Sess. 4. Decret. de Can. Script.*

2. *Canon of Scripture.* "In the name of Scripture we understand those canonical books of the Old Testament, of whose authority there *never* was any doubt in the church."

But the *Romish church* makes the apocryphal books of *equal authority* with those of the Old and New Testament, although such apocryphal books *were never recognized* as canonical by the Jews, to whom were committed the

* The decisions of the Council of Trent, referred to here and elsewhere in this Tract, are acknowledged as binding by every true Roman Catholic.

oracles of God, nor by the primitive church, nor by any general council, nor by the modern Greek church. "If any one doth not receive all these books," i. e. the apocryphal books, which are *intermixed* with the genuine and canonical books, "with every part of them, as they use to be read in the [*Roman*] Catholic church, and as they are contained in the ancient vulgar Latin edition, for holy and canonical, and shall knowingly contemn the aforesaid traditions, let him be anathema." Conc. Trid. Sess. 4, de Can. Script.

It is worthy of observation, that, besides the above-stated reasons why Protestants reject the apocryphal books, these books clearly and manifestly evince that they never were inspired, not only by the fabulous and contradictory statements they contain, and which are directly at variance with the canonical Scriptures, but also by the virtual acknowledgments made by some of the authors of the apocryphal books, that they were *not* inspired. Thus, in the prologue to the book of Ecclesiasticus, the son of Sirach entreats the reader to pardon any errors he may have committed in translating the works of his grandfather Jesus into Greek. In 1 Macc. 4 : 46, and 9 : 27, it is confessed that there was at that time no divinely-inspired *prophet in Israel;* consequently, the author of that book neither was nor could be an inspired writer. The second book of Maccabees, 2 : 33, is an avowed abridgment of the books of Jason and Cyrene; and the author concludes, 15 : 38, with the following words, which are utterly unworthy of a person writing by inspiration: "If I have done well, and as is fitting the story, it is that which I desired; but, if slenderly and meanly, it is that which I could attain unto."

Fabulous statements in the Apocryphal books. 1. Rest of chapters of Esther, 10 : 6. "A little fountain became a river, and there was light, and the sun, and much water. This river is Esther, whom the king married and made queen." 14 : 2.

2. The story of Bel and the Dragon is, confessedly, a mere

fiction, which contradicts the account of Daniel's being cast into the lion's den.

Contradictory statements. 1. The author of the book of the Wisdom of Solomon alludes to the people of Israel, as being in subjection to their enemies, which was not the case during Solomon's reign. We read, indeed, that he had enemies in the persons of Hadad, Rezon, and Jeroboam, 1 Kings, 11 : 14, 23, 25, 26, who vexed him; but we nowhere find that they subdued his people, and the schism of the ten tribes did not take place until after the death of Solomon.

2. Baruch is said, 1 : 2, to have been carried into *Babylon* at the very time when Jeremiah tells us, 43 : 6, 7, that he was carried into the land of *Egypt.*

3. The story in 1 Esdras, 3 : 4, besides wanting every mark of the majesty and sanctity of the sacred writings, contradicts Ezra's account of the return of the Jews from Babylon under Cyrus.

4. The first and second books of Maccabees contradict each other; for in the former, 1 Macc. 6 : 4–16, Antiochus Epiphanes is said to have died in Babylon; and in the latter he is represented, *first*, as having been slain by the priests at Nanea, in Persia, 2 Macc. 1 : 13–16, and *afterwards*, 9 : 28, as dying a miserable death *in a strange country among the mountains.*

5. In the book of Tobit, the angel that is introduced, 5 : 12, as representing himself as being a kinsman of Tobit, in 12 : 15, contradicts himself, by affirming that he is Raphael, one of the holy angels. The author of this book has also added to the views of God and of Providence, delineated in the Old Testament, tenets of Assyrian or Babylonian origin.

Contradictory doctrines. 1. *Prayers for the dead.* "And when he had made a gathering throughout the company, to the sum of two thousand drachms of silver, he sent it to Jerusalem, to offer a sin-offering, doing therein very well and honestly; for, if he had not hoped that they that were slain should have risen again, it had been superfluous and vain to pray for the dead." 2 Macc. 12 : 43, 44. This statement contradicts the whole tenor of the sacred writings, which nowhere enjoin or allow of prayers for the dead.

2. *The heathen notion of the transmigration of souls*, which is equally contradictory to the Bible, is asserted in Wisd. 8 : 19, 20. "For I was a witty child, and had a good spirit; yea, rather, being good, I came into a body undefiled."

3. *Justification by the works of the law*, in opposition to the Scriptures, which teach that we are justified or accounted righteous only by faith, is taught in various parts of the apocryphal books. "The just, which have many good works laid up with thee, shall out of their own deeds receive reward." 2 Esdras, 3:33. "Prayer is good with fasting, and alms and righteousness. . . . . Alms doth deliver from death, and shall purge away all sins. Those that exercise alms and righteousness shall be filled with life." Tobit 12:8, 9. "Whoso honoreth his father, maketh atonement for his sins." Ecclus. 3:3. "Alms maketh an atonement for sins." 3:30. "To forsake unrighteousness is a propitiation." 35:3.

4. *Sinless perfection.* "Riches are good unto him that hath no sin." Ecclus. 13:24. But what say the Scriptures? "There is *not* a just man upon earth, that doeth good, and sinneth not." Eccles. 7:20. "ALL have sinned, and come short of the glory of God." Rom. 3:23. "If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is *not* in us." 1 John, 1:8.

Immoral practices commended in the apocryphal books, which practices are prohibited in the Scriptures.

1. *Lying.* The instances already cited may also be adduced here.

2. A desperate act of *suicide*—which is expressly forbidden in Exod. 20:13, *Thou shalt* NOT *kill*—is related in 2 Macc. 14:41–46, as a *manful act*, and in terms of great commendation.

3. *Assassination*, which is equally prohibited, is commended in the book of Judith, 9: 2–9, in the case of the Shechemites, whose base murder is justly condemned in Gen. 49:7.

4. *Magical incantations*, which are forbidden in Levit. 19:26, and Deut. 18: 10, 11, 14, are introduced in Tobit 6:16, 17, as given by the advice of an angel of God.

To the preceding instances, which are directly at variance with the divinely inspired Scriptures, we may add, that in the apocryphal books there are passages which are so inconsistent with the relations of all other *profane historians*, that they cannot be admitted without much greater evidence than belongs to these books. Thus, 1 Macc. 8: 16, it is said that the Romans "committed their government to *one man every year*, who ruled over all that country, and that all were obedient to that one, and that there was neither envy nor emulation among them."

This assertion is contradicted by *every* Roman historian, with-

out exception. The imperial government was not established until more than a century *after* the time when the first book of Maccabees was written. In like manner, the account, in Macc. 1: 6, 7, of the death of Alexander, misnamed the Great, is not supported by any of the historians who have recorded his last hours.

3. It is the *duty of all to read the Scriptures.* The Scriptures, both by precept and example, represent it to be the duty of ALL to read them. "*Search* the Scriptures," is the command of Jesus Christ. John 5 : 39. "I charge you," says St. Paul, "that this epistle be read to *all* the holy brethren." 1 Thess. 5: 27. *Take unto you,* he says to the Ephesians, without exception, "the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God," Eph. 6 : 17 ; by which we are enabled to repel the temptations and to resist the assaults of the devil. See also Col. 3 : 16. The same apostle addresses the first part of his Epistles, not to the presbyters or bishops, but "to the churches of God, to them that are sanctified in Christ Jesus, and to ALL that call on the name of our Lord Jesus Christ." See Rom. 1 : 7 ; 1 Cor. 1 : 2 ; 2 Cor. 1 : 1 ; Gal. 1 : 2 ; Eph. 1 : 1. The apostle James, in like manner, addresses his Epistle to the "twelve tribes that are scattered abroad," 1 : 1 ; and Peter his first Epistle, 1 : 1, "to the *strangers* scattered throughout Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia ;" and his second Epistle yet more generally, "to ALL that have obtained like precious faith with us," 1 : 1 ; the apostle John writes to *fathers, young men, and children.* Now, what pretence can there be to hinder those persons from reading the Epistles which were addressed to them ? The Bereans are commended for their diligent searching of the Scriptures. Acts 17 : 11. It was the duty of the Jews to have the law in their houses, and to read it to their children, Deut. 6 : 7–9 ; and much more must it be the duty of *all* Christians to peruse the Gospel, since they live under a greater and richer dispensation.

But the *Church of Rome* PROHIBITS the reading of the Scriptures by the common people, alleging that more prejudice than benefit would arise to them from such perusal—Conc. Trid. Sess. 4, Decret. de Can. Scrip.—and makes it peril for booksellers to deal in Bibles. In the 4th Rule of the Index Librorum prohibitorum, it is thus enacted: "Inasmuch as it is manifest from experience, that if the Holy Bible, translated into the vulgar tongue, be indiscriminately allowed to every one, the temerity of men will cause more evil than good to arise from it"—with as much reason might men be prohibited from eating or drinking, for fear they should abuse that liberty—"it is on this point referred to the judgment of the bishops or inquisitors, who may, by the advice of the priest or the confessor, *permit* the reading of the Bible, translated into the vulgar tongue by Catholic authors, to those persons whose faith and piety, they apprehend, will be augmented and not injured by it; and this permission they must have in writing. But if any one shall have the *presumption* to read or possess it without such written permission, *he shall not receive absolution* until he have first delivered up such Bible to the ordinary. Booksellers who shall sell or otherwise dispose of Bibles in the vulgar tongue to any person not having such permission, shall forfeit the value of the books, to be applied by the bishop to some pious use, and shall be subjected to such other penalties as the bishop shall judge proper. But regulars shall neither read nor purchase such Bibles, without a special license from their superiors."

Perfectly in unison with this decree is the Encyclical Letter of Leo XII., dated May 3d, 1824, and addressed to all patriarchs, primates, archbishops, and bishops. "We also, venerable brethren, conformably to our apostolical duty, exhort you diligently to occupy yourselves, by all means, to turn away your flock from these *deadly pastures*"—the unadulterated Scriptures, translated into the vulgar tongue and circulated by Protestants, which this "servant of the

servants of God" had just before termed a "*Gospel of the Devil*"—"reprove, beseech, be instant in season and out of season, in all patience and doctrine, that the faithful entrusted to you, adhering strictly to the rules of our congregation of the Index, be persuaded that if the sacred Scriptures be everywhere indiscriminately published, more evil than advantage will arise thence, on account of the rashness of men."

It is no wonder that the Romish Church is so inveterate against Christian people obeying the word of God, and reading it. The *new* doctrines contained in the creed of Pius IV. have no warrant in Scripture; and the assembly at Trent *innovated* in matters of faith, by setting up unwritten tradition for a rule of it.

II. PRIVATE JUDGMENT IN MATTERS OF RELIGION—PRETENDED INFALLIBILITY OF THE POPE.

1. *The holy Scriptures invite and command inquiry.* "Prove all things," says St. Paul; "hold fast that which is good." 1 Thess. 5 : 21. "Beloved, believe not every spirit," or teacher, "but *try* the spirits, whether they are of God; because many false prophets are gone out into the world." 1 John, 4 : 1. How are we to do this, if we must take all things upon trust, and without any examination whatever? "I speak as unto wise men; *judge* ye what I say." 1 Cor. 10 : 15. "Be ye *ready* always to *give an answer to every man* that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you." 1 Pet. 3 : 15.

But how can Christians give such answer, unless they understand and judge of the grounds of faith themselves? "Though we," says Paul, "or an angel from heaven, preach any other Gospel to you than that which ye have received, let him be accursed." Gal. 1 : 8. Which passage plainly supposes that Christians may read, and can judge for themselves, when and what doctrines are contrary to the Gospel, and that they ought to do it, and not blindly rely upon any one—no, not an apostle, or an angel from heaven.

In contradiction to these and many other texts of Scripture which might be produced, the *Romish church* claims to be infallible, and that it belongs to her to judge of the sense of Scripture; so that all persons are bound by her judgment and decisions. Conc. Trid. Sess. 4, Decret. de Edit. et Usu Libr. Sac. Catechism of the Council of Trent, Creed, Art. 9, § 19, p. 96, Lond. 1687. And in the Creed of Pius IV., Art. 14, every Romanist thus declares: "I also receive the holy Scriptures according to that sense which the holy mother church—to whom it belongs to judge of the true sense and interpretation of the holy Scripture—did, and doth hold. Nor will I ever take and interpret it otherwise than according to the unanimous consent of the Fathers."

2. *Pretended infallibility of the Pope.* The papal claim to infallibility has no foundation in Scripture, reason, or antiquity. Romanists, it is well known, are not agreed among themselves where this pretended infallibility exists; whether in the pope, or in a general council, or in the diffusive body of Christians. *Both popes and general councils* have notoriously contradicted one another; and therefore *neither* of them can be infallible. To mention only a *few* instances. Gregory, surnamed the Great, about the latter end of the sixth century, declared that whoever should claim the *universal episcopate* would be the forerunner of antichrist. Epist. lib. 6, ep. 30. Yet this very universal episcopate was assumed, three or four years afterwards, by Boniface III., and has been subsequently claimed by numerous pontiffs who have sat in what they are pleased to call the chair of St. Peter. Pope Sixtus V., in 1590, published an edition of the Latin Vulgate, which, by a bull, he commanded should be received everywhere, and in all cases, for *true, legitimate, authentic,* and *undoubted;* and that all future editions should be made conformable to this, not the least syllable being changed, added, or omitted, on pain of the greater excommunication.

Notwithstanding all his infallibility, Clement VIII., not very long after, revoked the decree of Sixtus, *suppressed* his edition, and published another of his own, in which he made more than 2,000 corrections.

These fatal variances between editions alike promulgated by pontiffs claiming infallibility, have been exposed by various Protestant divines. Thomas James, in his "Bellum Papale, sive Concordia Discors Sixti V.," Londonini, 1600, 4to, has pointed out very numerous additions, omissions, CONTRADICTIONS, and other differences between the editions of the two infallible pontiffs, Sixtus V. and Clement VIII. Specimens of these contradictions may be seen in the author's Introduction to the Critical Study and Knowledge of the Holy Scriptures, vol. 2.

This pretended infallibility is supposed to proceed from the Holy Ghost; but how could the Holy Ghost dwell in the hearts of some of those pontiffs who have worn the triple crown? The popes *and Saints* Eleutherius and Victor both sanctioned the heresy of the Montanists: under Dioclesian's persecution, *Saint* Marcellus denied the faith of Christ and sacrificed to idols at the prospect of immediate death. "He lived," we are told, "to repent of his momentary departure from the faith; but his case affords another remarkable example of the supposed *infallible* succession." Liberius, who had been deposed for his orthodoxy, in order to regain his see, subscribed an Arian formulary of faith, which Hilary, Bishop of Arles, designates "a blasphemous creed."

"In looking upon Liberius as a frail and erring mortal, sorely tempted and beset, banished from home, friends, and country, we pause before we pass a severe sentence upon him, remembering that, were we equally tempted, our faith might have failed like his. But when we view him as an INFALLIBLE PONTIFF, we are obliged to look upon his conduct in another light; and, while we commiserate the frailty of the man, to adduce it as a proof of the unfounded nature of those claims, which rest on the supposition of an *unerring succession* of infallible guides. . . . The historians and those strenuous advocates of papal infallibility, Baronius and Bellarmine, appear very desirous of softening down, as much as

possible, this uncompromising circumstance, conscious no doubt that, if admitted to the full extent, it would completely invalidate the pretension of freedom from doctrinal error in the successors of Saint Peter. Bellarmine, finding the subject too difficult even for *his* jesuitical skill, sums up his arguments by remarking, that, however these things may be, Liberius NEITHER taught heresy, NOR was a heretic, but merely sinned in the outward act. But these palliating attempts are vain. 'St. Hilary, bishop of Poictiers, Op. pp. 1158, 1134–1137, speaks of this papal lapse, of which he was an eye-witness, very plainly and openly; not being very anxious, it seems, to screen the *infallible chair*.' His language is very strong. 'I anathematize thee, O Liberius, thee and thy companions; again I anathematize thee; and for the third time, I say unto thee, O Liberius, that thou art a prevaricator.' And, among other very strong terms employed, he designates the creed signed by Liberius 'a blasphemous creed.' The same testimony is borne by St. Jerome, Chron. ad. ann.; and indeed the papal historian Dupin, Eccl. Hist., vol. 2, p. 63, acknowledges that all the ancient authors speak of the fall of Liberius as the approbation of the heresy of the Arians." Keary's View of Papal and Concilian Infallibility, pp. 18–20.

Saint Felix, the successor of Liberius, was also an Arian. *Saint* Zosimus openly favored the heresy of Palagius and Celestius. Vigilius, who favored the Servian heresy, a branch of that broached by Eutyches, obtained the see of Rome by bribery; banished the bishop who had been canonically elected, and who, on the evidence of *forged letters*, had been accused of corresponding with the hostile Goths; and Vigilius changed his opinions only *four times*. Honorius I. determined in favor of the Monothelite heresy, and condemned, as heretical, the opinion of the orthodox bishops. John XII. who, at the early age of sixteen, without having been in holy orders, or indeed capable of ordination, was placed in St. Peter's chair by his father Alberic, a Roman consul—this "monster of iniquity," as Cardinal Baronius terms him, was convicted of simony, perjury, sacrilege, murder, and blasphemy, and deposed by the emperor Otho, who appointed Leo VIII. in his room. Resuming

his dignity by means of an armed force, John assembled a council of his supporters, and, in the fulness of papal power, disannulled all that had been enacted against him. While the emperor was preparing to make an example of the iniquitous but infallible prelate, he fell a sacrifice to the vengeance of a dishonored husband. John XVIII. was a *layman;* and his successor, Boniface IX., who at the age of ten years purchased the papacy, after ten years of profligacy, rapine, and murders, was forcibly and ignominiously expelled by the Romans; and after a temporary resumption of his dignity, finding the hatred of the people on the point of bursting forth again to violent measures, *sold* the right and title to infallibility to the ignorant and unlettered Gregory VI. John XXIII. was utterly destitute of all principles, both of religion and probity; and, after purchasing the cardinalate, *poisoned* his predecessor, Alexander V. This infallible pontiff was deposed for his various crimes. Alexander VI. disgraced his dignity by his ambition, avarice, cruelties, and debaucheries; and, by a righteous reäction of divine Providence, died, having by mistake taken that poison which he had prepared for some cardinals whom he had invited to an entertainment. Not to dwell on other crimes which have disgraced the occupants of the holy see, numerous popes and antipopes have reigned at various times, all of them claiming to be infallible, and anathematizing their antagonists. For a full exposure of the unfounded claims to infallibility, the reader is referred to the Rev. W. Keary's Historical Review of Papal and Conciliar Infallibility, London, 1826, 12mo, from which the preceding statement is abridged, and which is supported in all its details by the authorities of Romanist historians.

III CLAIMS OF THE ROMISH CHURCH TO SUPREMACY.

Jesus Christ prohibited all disputes concerning rank and preëminency in his kingdom. "Ye know," he said, "that the princes of the Gentiles exercise dominion over them,

and they that are great exercise authority upon them. But *it shall* NOT *be so among you:* but whosoever will be great among you, let him be your minister; and whosoever will be chief among you, let him be your servant: even as the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many." Matt. 20. Paul, addressing the Ephesians, says, "Ye are built upon the foundation of the *apostles and prophets,* Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner-stone." Eph. 2 : 20. It will be observed that the apostles and prophets are here put in the same rank, and are *all equally* called *foundations.* To Jesus Christ alone belongs the preëminence.

But the *Church of Rome* claims to be the supreme mistress of all churches, and arrogates to the popes a primacy of dominion. "I acknowledge the Holy Catholic Apostolic Roman Church to be the mother and mistress of all churches; and I promise to swear true obedience to the pope of Rome, who is the successor of St. Peter, the prince of the apostles, and vicar of Jesus Christ." Creed of Pius IV., Art. 23, Catechism. Roman., Part I., de Symb. Art. 9, § 15.

The Romish church is NOT the mother and mistress of all churches: *the* mother church was the church at Jerusalem, which was formed immediately after the ascension of Christ; next, was formed the church at Samaria, Acts 8, A. D. 34; and then, the churches in Cyprus and Phœnice, and at Antioch, by those Christians who were dispersed in consequence of the persecution that arose about Stephen. Acts 11 : 19–21. There is no evidence whatever that the church at Rome was founded by Peter, as the Romanists affirm, or by the joint labors of Peter *and* Paul. In the first council held at Nice, all other Christian churches were on an equality with that at Rome; and in the fourth general council, that convened at Chalcedon, it was declared, that the church at Constantinople should have equal honors with that at Rome, because the seat of imperial government was there. *Catholic,* that is, universal, the Romish

church NEVER WAS, NOR IS; for ecclesiastical history attests that both the Asiatic and African churches formerly rejected her authority; and also that the Eastern churches to this day despise her pride and affectation of supremacy. And a simple inspection of the map of the globe will prove, that the Romish church is by no means universal. Over the united churches of England and Ireland, Rome can have no authority; for the *churches of England and of Ireland were* MORE ANCIENT *than the pope's supremacy:* they were free churches from the first planting of Christianity among the ancient Britons and Irish; and whatever oppressions those churches suffered from *papal intrusions, fraud, and violence,* their natural freedom remained unaltered, and that freedom is justly maintained. The fiction of papal supremacy is unsupported by Scripture, and is a *novelty* of the seventh century. See Bishop Burgess' Protestant's Catechism, where all these topics are unanswerably proved.

IV. OBJECTS AND MANNER OF WORSHIP.

1. *Objects of worship.* The Scriptures expressly affirm that God alone is the proper object of our worship. "Thou shalt *worship the Lord thy God,* and him *only* shalt thou serve." Matt. 4 : 10. "It is written," saith Jesus Christ, and therefore it must refer to Deut. 6 : 13, "Thou shalt fear the Lord thy God, and serve him;" and again, Deut. 10 : 20, "*Him* shalt thou serve, and to him shalt thou cleave;" that is, Him *only* shalt thou serve, and to him *only* shalt thou cleave in the way of divine worship; for so our infallible Instructor interprets it, Matt. 4 : 10 : "Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him *only.*" In all these passages, God, and God alone, is the proper object of our devout worship.

Further, the Scripture says that *Jesus Christ* is our ONLY *Mediator and Advocate* with God, and the only foundation of our salvation. "There is *one God,* and *one Mediator* between God and man, the man Christ Jesus, who

gave himself a ransom for all." 1 Tim. 2 : 5, 6. "If any man sin, we have an *Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ* the righteous ; and he is the propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world." 1 John, 2 : 1, 2. "Neither is there salvation in any other ; for there is *none other name* under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved." Acts 4 : 12. "Other *foundation* can *no man* lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ." 1 Cor. 3 : 11.

The *Romish church,* on the contrary, admits the merits and intercession of the Virgin Mary and of the saints. "I also believe that the saints, who reign with Christ, are to be *worshipped* and *prayed to ;* and that their relics are to be venerated." Creed of Pius IV., Art. 20. See also Conc. Trid. Sess. 25, de Invocat. Catechism. Roman., part 3, ch. 2. The saints in the Romish church are almost numberless : the lives of the saints, published by the Bollandists, fill *only fifty-four massive folio volumes,* which do not come lower than the month of October ; and the little hagiography of Mr. Alban Butler extends through twelve closely-printed octavo volumes.

To evade the charge of idolatry, some writers of the Romish church have recourse to a superior worship of God, which they call *Latria*, and an inferior worship, by them termed *Dulia*, and which they pay to the saints, to images, and to the cross. But there is no foundation for this distinction ; for, not to urge what we shall soon proceed to show, that *all* worship of images and of every thing else, God alone excepted, is most expressly forbidden in the holy Scriptures :

"1. *The nature of religious worship will not admit of such nice distinctions.* It is plain, from our Lord's answer to the devil, that he did not consider there were different degrees of religious worship, or that any but God might be worshipped in any way or manner. The devil required from him no more than the papists give to saints and images—'Fall down and worship me'—and our Lord's refusal, saying, that God alone is to be served, must be understood to determine, that no degree of religious worship is to be given to any creature whatsoever.

"2. *The Scriptures mention no such distinction.* Nothing is there said of an inferior degree of worship fit to be offered to saints or angels. An angel refused any kind of worship from St. John. 'I fell down to worship before the feet of the angel which showed me these things; then saith he unto me, See thou do it not, for I am thy fellow-servant. . . . . Worship God.' Rev. 19:10, and 22:9. Yet it is evident that the church of Rome commands its members to do the very thing that St. John was directed not to do. When Cornelius the centurion fell down at St. Peter's feet and worshipped him, the apostle forbade him, saying, 'Stand up, I also am a man.'

"3. *The common people neither understand nor observe this distinction.* This is confessed by one of their own writers. 'The manner in which the church invokes the saints cannot be accounted idolatry, although the ignorant people have carried the abuse *almost as far as idolatry*, either in considering the saints as the authors of the favors they ask, or in placing more confidence in their mediation than even in that of Jesus Christ; or, finally, in persuading themselves that, independently of a good life, the merits and intercessions of the saints might enable them to obtain salvation.'" See the History of the Council of Trent, translated into French by Father Le Courayer. Hamilton's Tracts on some leading Errors of the Church of Rome, pp. 33, 34.

By whatever modified appellation Romanists may designate the worship they pay to images, its practical tendency on the minds of the lower orders must be collected from the effect it produces in those countries where the religion of the church of Rome is the only one of which they have any notion. In the Christian Examiner, for February, 1827, there is an account of the coronation of the image of the Virgin Mary of the Immaculate Conception, in the church of Gesu Vecchio, in the city of Naples, so lately as the 30th of December, 1826. The account, with its illustrative remarks, is too long to admit of insertion in this place. It must, therefore, suffice to state, that "when the crown was placed on the head of the infant Jesus, there was a general movement; but when she," the image of the virgin, "was crowned, the lower orders could no longer contain themselves; and the shouts of the men, the cries, the outstretched imploring hands, the tears and convulsive shrieks of the women, showed how vehemently and profoundly they adored the virgin, and worshipped her image." After the coronation, the archbishop of Naples, and priests, pro-

nounced certain sentences and responses, in which the unlimited power of the virgin over all nature was unhesitatingly proclaimed in phrases almost scriptural.

4. *The doctors of the Romish church are not agreed concerning the distinction between Latria, or supreme worship, and Dulia, or inferior worship.*

"Many writers in that church deny that there is any difference between the two words, and admit 'that it is one and the same virtue of religion which containeth them both. If some say that it is idolatry and mortal sin to give *Latria* to a saint or image, which ought only to receive *Dulia*, and if others tell you that these words signify the same thing, let a man do what he will, he incurs the guilt of idolatry, in the opinion either of the one or the other of these parties.'

"If the papists excuse themselves from the charge of idolatry, by making a distinction between two different kinds of religious worship, which the nature of the thing does not admit of, which the Bible nowhere mentions, which the common people cannot understand, and concerning which their own doctors have disputed, the Protestants have a good excuse for not worshipping saints or images." Hamilton's Tracts, pp. 34, 35.

Among these reputed saints, some few there are whose praise is, and ever will be, deservedly in the Christian church: such, for instance, as were distinguished instruments of diffusing the knowledge of the Gospel while here on earth; and these, we doubt not, are now shining with a glory like the sun in the kingdom of our Father in heaven. But others there are, enrolled in the catalogue of saints, who *never had any existence* but that which is assigned to them in the legends of the Romish church, which legends have no foundation whatever in authentic history, civil or ecclesiastical; and these accounts are so romantic, that one would imagine that no sensible Romanist could ever believe there were such persons. Witness the *gigantic* Saint Christopher, who is fabled to have carried Christ across an arm of the sea; Saint Amphibolius, who was only the *cloak* of Alban, the reputed protomartyr of England; *Saint* Longinus, the Roman soldier who thrust the spear into Christ's

body upon the cross; *Saint* George; *Saint* Ursula, with her eleven thousand virgin martyrs, of whom no traces are to be found in history. Others again, who are exalted to the character of saints by the Romish church, one would think, could be thus promoted for nothing but their folly. The great *Saint* Francis, according to their own accounts, may justly be suspected of wanting common sense, as well as common decency. His throwing away his clothes, and running about stark naked, was such a freak that he ought either to have been publicly chastised for his impudence, or confined for lunacy; and his preaching to birds and beasts, and talking to them as fellow-creatures, was an act equally stupid and ridiculous. Preservative against Popery, vol. 2, tit. 6, p. 322.

Others, however, of these reputed saints were NOTORIOUS SINNERS, who have left only such remembrances of them as must raise the just indignation of every pious and virtuous mind. Such, to specify a few only of the most notorious, were *Saint Gregory* VII., better known by the name of Hildebrand, whose whole life was one unceasing and unprincipled effort to realize the universal dominion of the world, which he claimed as an appendage to the see of Rome, and against whose canonization every government in communion with Rome exclaimed, so that he is worshipped only in *Ireland* and in Italy. Dr. Philpott's Supplemental Letter to Mr. Butler, pp. 145, 147. *Saint* THOMAS A BECKET, a rebel to his king, and a traitor to his country, who, having solemnly promised to obey the laws of England, deliberately violated his promise and his allegiance, Henry's Hist. of Engl., vol. 5, p. 344; for which saintly virtues he was canonized, and became in a manner the idol of this part of the world for nearly two hundred years, so that in one year, A. D. 1420, not fewer than fifty thousand foreigners came in pilgrimage to visit the tomb of this *perjured man*, "for whose martyrdom," the Roman Missal for the use of the Laity, p. 85, London edit., 1815, says, "the angels rejoice."

"About fifty years after Becket's death, it was the subject of a public dispute at the university of Paris, whether Becket was in heaven or hell, so ambiguous a point was his sanctity. Some asserted that, for his extreme pride, he deserved to be damned: others, on the contrary, maintained that the miracles wrought at his tomb were undoubted proofs of his salvation. This last argument indeed would have been unanswerable, if these miracles were as evidently proved as industriously spread.

"He had deserved too well in the court of Rome not to have a place in the catalogue of the saints. . . . . He was therefore canonized two or three years after his death. However desirous the pope was to show his gratitude to the memory of so faithful a servant, the world must first be convinced that the cause he died in was approved by God; otherwise his canonization might have been objected against. Nothing was more proper to infuse this belief into the minds of the people than miracles; accordingly, such multitudes were forthwith wrought at the tomb of the new martyr, that, in any other age, the number of these miracles, instead of satisfying the world, would have had a quite contrary effect. Neither Christ nor his apostles worked the like, or so many, to prove the truth of Christianity, as this new saint did to authorize the privileges and immunities of the clergy. It was not thought sufficient to assert his restoring dead men to life, but it was farther affirmed he raised the very *beasts*. It was given out for certain, that being exposed to view in the church before he was buried, he rose out of his coffin, and went and lighted the wax-candles which had been put out. It is said, also, after the funeral ceremony was over, he held up his hand to bless the people. To all these miracles, many others are added, equally unbecoming the majesty of God. Meanwhile they were spread with that confidence, that not a man was found hardy enough to show the least sign of doubt. The pope's legates, sent some time after to examine these matters, found the people at Canterbury so persuaded of the truth of all these facts, that, upon such public evidence, his holiness thought he should run no great hazard in canonizing Becket, by the name of St. Thomas of Canterbury. The tomb of the new saint was first adorned with few ornaments; but, fifty years after his death, his body was laid in a shrine, enriched with a prodigious quantity of precious stones. As a farther honor to his memory, the pope ordered every fiftieth year a jubilee to be solemnized in the church where he lay. From thenceforward,

miracles became so common at his tomb, and their fame spread so far, that they drew votaries from all parts of Christendom, who came to Canterbury to obtain the intercession of this new saint. In 1420, they kept an account of above fifty thousand foreigners, of all ages and sexes, that came in pilgrimage that year to this renowned tomb." Rapin's Hist. of Eng., vol. 1, pp. 232, 233, folio edition.

Saint Pius V., who, besides burning more heretics (Christians) than almost any of his predecessors, not only issued a bull of excommunication against Queen Elizabeth, depriving her of her crown, but also excited her Romanist subjects to rebellion, and supplied some of them with money to carry on their traitorous designs.

"The invocation of saints and of the Virgin Mary is contrary to the practice of antiquity: it was first introduced by Petrus Gnapheus, a presbyter of Bithynia, afterwards bishop of Antioch, about A. D. 470, and it was first received into the public litanies about one hundred and fifty years after." In the sixth century only were temples first erected in honor of the saints; and it was not until the latter end of the ninth century that the Roman pontiffs impiously arrogated to themselves the power of raising dead sinful mortals to the dignity of saints, and constituted them objects of worship, whose prayers and merits procure heavenly blessings, and by whose hands they are conveyed.

"The invocation of saints is contrary to reason; for how can *they* hear prayers? God alone is the object of all the worship and veneration which are due to an invisible being." It is equally contrary to Scripture; for "the dead *know not* any thing," that is, as the context shows, they know not any thing of the affairs of this world. "Their love, and their envy, and their hatred, is perished: neither have they any more a portion for ever in any thing that is done under the sun." Eccl. 9: 5, 6. Townsend's Accusations of History against the Church of Rome, p. 103.

Image-worship is absolutely and universally prohibited in Scripture. "Thou shalt *not* make unto thee any graven

image, or any likeness of any thing that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth. Thou shalt *not* bow down thyself to them, nor serve them." Exod. 20 : 4, 5; Deut. 4 : 15, 16; Acts 17 : 29; 1 John, 5 : 21.

But the *Romish church* declares that "it is *lawful* to represent God and the Holy Trinity by images; and that the images and relics of Christ and the saints *are to be duly honored, venerated, or worshipped;* and that in this veneration and worship, those are venerated which are represented by them." Conc. Trid. Sess. 25, de Invocat. Catech., Part 3, ch. 2. Pius IVth's creed runs thus: "I most firmly assert that the images of Christ and of the mother of God, who was always a virgin, are to be had and retained; and that due *honor and worship* is to be given to them." The worship thus enjoined consists in kissing images, uncovering the head of them, offering incense, bowing, and making prayers to them. The adoration of the host and of the cross are two notorious instances of idolatrous worship.

2. *Manner of worship.* Under the Jewish dispensation Jerusalem was the place, and the temple was the house, in which were the symbols of the Divine presence, and thither all Jews were bound to resort three times in the year to offer their prayers and sacrifices to God: but the Gospel teaches us that there is now no such symbolical presence of the Almighty in one place more than in another; for the Divine presence is no longer confined to any one place, but he equally accepts the worship which is devoutly offered to him throughout the world. "The hour cometh," said Jesus Christ to the woman of Samaria, "when ye shall neither in this place, *nor* yet at Jerusalem, worship the Father. . . . . The hour cometh, and now is, when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth: for the Father seeketh such to worship him." John 4 : 21, 23. On another occasion he said, "*Where* two or three are gathered together in my name, *there* am I in the midst of them."

Matt. 18 : 20. "I will therefore," says Paul, 1 Tim. 2 : 8, "that men pray *everywhere*, without wrath and doubting" of God's acceptance of our supplications.

But in the *church of Rome* it is reputed a great act of devotion to go in pilgrimages, to visit the shrines of particular saints and relics. Cardinal Bellarmine, quoting the decree of the Council of Trent, Sess. 25, expressly affirms, that it is a work of piety to go on pilgrimages to holy places. De Cult. Sacr. lib. 3, c. 8. Among the inducements held out in the bull for the jubilee in 1825, to persuade persons to go to Rome, was that of beholding the cradle of Christ! "Can any man of reflection," it has been truly asked, "admit that the pope himself believes that the cradle of Christ is to be seen at Rome? and if not, what is the pope?"

2. The *Scriptures* teach us that divine service ought to be performed in a language that is intelligible to the people.

"He that speaketh in an unknown tongue, speaketh not unto men, but unto God: for *no man* understandeth him. If I come unto you," says St. Paul, "speaking with tongues, what shall I profit you, except I shall speak to you either by revelation, or by knowledge, or by prophesying, or by doctrine? For if I pray in an unknown tongue, my spirit prayeth, but my understanding is unfruitful. Else, when thou shalt bless with the spirit, how shall he that occupieth the room of the unlearned say Amen at thy giving of thanks, seeing he *understandeth not* what thou sayest? . . . . . In the church I had rather speak five words with my understanding, that by my voice I might teach others also, than ten thousand words in an unknown tongue." 1 Cor. 14 : 2, 6, 14, 16, 19.

But in the *Romish church* mass is celebrated, and many other acts of religious worship are performed in Latin, a language which is unintelligible to the people, and with numberless ceremonies, some of heathen origin, for which

there is no foundation whatever in Scripture; and the Council of Trent, acting as it repeatedly affirmed, under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, denounces an anathema against any one who presumes to say any thing to the contrary. Conc. Trid. Sess. 22, de Sacrificio Missæ, cap. 8.

V. THE COMPLETE ATONEMENT OF CHRIST CONTRADICTED BY THE CHURCH OF ROME.

The Scripture teaches that, by his one oblation of himself upon the cross, Jesus Christ has made a full, perfect, and sufficient atonement; and that, since he hath expiated our sins by his blood, there is no need of any other sacrifice. "If any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous: and *he is the propitiation for our sins;* and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world." 1 John, 3 : 1, 2. "*Christ hath redeemed us* from the curse of the law." Gal. 3 : 13. "Christ being come a High-Priest of good things to come . . . . he entered in *once* into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us." Heb. 9 : 12. "*Once* in the end of the world hath he appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself." Heb. 9 : 26. "By *one offering* he hath perfected *for ever* them that are sanctified." Heb. 10 : 14.

But the *Romish church* daily renews the sacrifice of Jesus Christ in the celebration of the mass; and teaches "that in the mass is offered to God a true, proper, and propitiatory sacrifice for the quick," or living, "and dead." Creed of Pius IV., Art. 17. "If any one say, that in the mass there is not a true and proper sacrifice offered unto God; or, that to be offered is nothing else but for Christ to be given to us to eat, let him be anathema." Conc. Trid. Sess. 22, de Sacrificio Missæ, Can. 1. This sacrifice of the mass, as it is called, not only contradicts the two passages above cited, but is also destructive of all the arguments contained in the seventh, eighth, and ninth chapters of the Epistle to the Hebrews.

VI. OF JUSTIFICATION AND THE PARDON OF SIN.

1. *The Scripture* declares that "there is *no man* that sinneth not," 1 Kings, 8 : 46 ; that "the *whole world* lieth in wickedness," 1 John, 5 : 19 ; that "the Lord looked down from heaven upon the children of men, to see if there were any that did understand and seek after God. They are *all* gone aside, they are all together become filthy ; there is none that doeth good, no, not one. *All* have sinned, and come short of the glory of God." Psalm 14 : 2, 3 ; Rom. 3 : 10–18, 23. "*All* we, like sheep, have gone astray." Isaiah 53 : 6. But the *Council of Trent* declares "that it is *not* their intention to comprehend the blessed and unspotted Virgin Mary, the mother of God, in this decree, where it treats of original sin." Conc. Trid. Sess. 5.

2. The *Scripture* asserts that we are justified, or accounted righteous before God, only for the merit of our Lord Jesus Christ, through faith, and not meritoriously by our own works.

"*The righteousness* of God is *by faith* of Jesus Christ unto all, and upon all them that believe; for there is no difference : for all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God ; being *justified* freely by his grace, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus. Where is boasting then ? It is excluded. By what law ? Of works ? Nay ; but by the law of faith. Therefore we conclude, that a man is justified by faith without the deeds of the law." Rom. 3 : 22–24, 27, 28. "By grace are ye saved, through *faith ;* and that not of yourselves : it is the gift of God : *not* of works, lest any man should boast." Eph. 2 : 8, 9. Consequently, there can be no such thing as merit in any thing that we can say or do. "When," says our Saviour, "ye shall have done all those things which are commanded you, say, We are *unprofitable* servants." Luke 17 : 10.

But the *Council of Trent* teaches, that the good works of justified persons are truly and properly meritorious, and

fully worthy of eternal life, by denouncing an anathema against all who hold a contrary doctrine! Conc. Trid. Sess. 6, cap. 16, can. 32.

VII. OF THE SACRAMENTS.

1. *Number of the sacraments.* Jesus Christ instituted only *two* sacraments: namely, Baptism, "Go ye, and teach all nations, *baptizing* them," etc., Matt. 28 : 19; and the Lord's Supper. See Luke 26 : 19, 20, and the parallel passages.

But the *Romish church* teaches, that "there are truly and properly *seven* sacraments of the new law instituted by our Lord Jesus Christ, and are necessary to the salvation of mankind," although all the sacraments are not necessary to every person, "namely, Baptism, Confirmation, the Lord's Supper, Penance, Extreme Unction, Orders, and Matrimony," Creed of Pius IV., Art. 15; and the Council of Trent denounces a curse against any who say that these "were not all instituted by Christ, or that there are more or fewer than seven, or that" any of the seven is not truly and properly a sacrament. Sess. 7, can. 1. Peter Lombard, a writer of the twelfth century, was the *first* who reckons seven sacraments, adding to Baptism and the Lord's Supper these five, namely, Confirmation, Penance, Orders, Matrimony, and the Extreme Unction. Pope Eugenius IV., about the middle of the fifteenth century, pronounced that these five, as well as the other two, ought to be considered as sacraments; and in the following century the Council of Trent and Pope Pius IV. declared them to be equally sacraments. Consequently, not one of these five were or could have been constituted sacraments by Jesus Christ; though the Council of Trent has been pleased to assert the contrary.

2. *Of communion in both kinds.* The Scripture teaches us, that Jesus Christ instituted the communion in both kinds, that is, *bread* and *wine*, and so commanded that it should be celebrated. "Jesus took *bread*, and blessed it,

and gave it to *the disciples,* and said, 'Take, eat; this is'—represents, according to the oriental idiom—'my body.' And he took the *cup,* and gave thanks, and gave it them, saying, 'Drink *ye all* of it; for this is,' represents, 'my blood of the new testament.'" Matt. 26 : 26–28.

But the church of Rome has *changed* what Christ appointed, and has deprived the laity of the cup; and has anathematized any who say, "that from the command of God, and the necessity of salvation, all and every believer in Christ ought to receive both kinds of the most holy sacrament of the eucharist." Conc. Trid. Sess. 21, can. 1. "I do also confess, that under *either* kind or species only, whole and entire, Christ and the true sacrament is received." Creed of Pius IV., Art. 18. The Council of Constance, held in the year 1416, was the first that sacrilegiously deprived the laity of the cup in the sacrament, in direct contradiction to Christ's command, and the practice of the primitive church. The testimonies of the fathers and ecclesiastical writers, for thirteen or fourteen hundred years, are collected by Bishop Beveridge on the Articles. Art. 30.

The Scripture teaches us that the consecrated bread and wine are the communion of the body and blood of Christ. "The cup of blessing which we bless, is it not the communion of the blood of Christ? The bread which we break, is it not the communion of the body of Christ?" 1 Cor. 10 : 16.

But the Romish church affirms, that "in the most holy sacrament of the eucharist there is *really* and *substantially* the body and blood, together with the soul and divinity of our Lord Jesus Christ; and that there is a conversion of the whole substance of the bread into his body, and of the whole substance of the wine into his blood, which conversion the" Roman "Catholic church calls *transubstantiation.*" Creed of Pius IV., Art. 17.

This term was not invented until the thirteenth century:

the first idea of Christ's bodily presence in the eucharist was started in the beginning of the eighth century; the first writer who maintained the doctrine was Paschasius Radbertus, in the ninth century, before it was firmly established; and the first public assertion of it was at the third Lateran Council, in the year 1215, after it had been for some time avowed by the popes, and in obedience to their injunctions inculcated by the clergy. But the *term* transubstantiation was not known until the thirteenth century, when it was invented by Stephen, Bishop of Autun. "This doctrine of transubstantiation subverts the very foundation on which the credibility of the Christian religion is built, viz., our Saviour's miracles; and not only does it contradict the Scripture, which says that we eat bread after the consecration of it, 1 Cor. 11 : 27, but it is also contrary to reason, which teaches that the same body cannot be in two places at the same time; and it is contrary to the report which our senses make about their proper objects. So that transubstantiation contains many gross falsehoods, and is incredible to all who consult the word of God, their own reason, and common sense." On this subject, consult Archbishop Tillotson's discourse against Transubstantiation.

VIII. OF MARRIAGE.

"Marriage," the Scripture declares, "is honorable in all, and the bed undefiled." Heb. 13 : 4. "To avoid fornication, let every man have his own wife, and every woman her own husband." 1 Cor. 7 : 2. These precepts are spoken universally; and no exception is made of the clergy, or ministers of the Gospel: nor can any one show that God hath excepted priests or monks. See also 1 Tim. 3 : 2, 4, 5, 12; Tit. 1 : 6. In the prediction of the great apostasy from the pure faith of the Gospel, St. Paul enumerates the "forbidding to marry" as one of the criteria of which the Holy "Spirit speaketh expressly." 1 Tim. 4 : 1, 3.

In opposition to the divine commands, the Council of

Trent decrees that the "clergy *may not marry.*" Sess. 24, can. 9. "Siricius, who died A. D. 399, was the first pope who forbade the marriage of the clergy; but it is probable that this prohibition was but little regarded, as the celibacy of the clergy seems not to have been completely established till the papacy of Gregory VII., at the end of the eleventh century; and even then it was complained of by many writers." Bishop Tomline's Elem. of Christ. Theol., vol. 2, p. 520.

The *spirit* of popery remains the same. The Romish clergy are, to this day, forbidden to marry; and the evils resulting from this prohibition have been often and ably set forth.

IX. OF PURGATORY AND INDULGENCES.

1. The Scripture declares that "it is appointed unto men *once* to die, but after this the judgment," Heb. 9 : 27 : and in 1 Sam. 25 : 29; Matt. 7 : 13, 14; 8 : 11, 12, and Luke 16 : 22, 23, mention is made *only* of a two-fold receptacle of souls after death. The penitent thief was to be *that day in paradise*, Luke 23 : 43; "and it is the uniform declaration of the Scriptures, that all sins are forgiven upon our own repentance, through faith and trust in the atonement."

In direct contradiction to the Bible, the Council of Trent affirms, that "there is a purgatory, or place of torment after this life, for the expiation of the sins of good men which are not sufficiently purged here; and that the souls there detained are helped by the masses, prayers, alms, and other good works of the living." Conc. Trid. Sess. 6, Can. 30; Sess. 25, Decret. de Purgat. The practice of praying for the dead began in the third century; but purgatory was not even mentioned until long after. It was at first doubtfully received, and was not fully established until the papacy of Gregory, in the beginning of the *seventh* century.

2. The holy Scriptures declare, that it is the preroga-

tive of the infinite and almighty God alone to forgive sins, Psalm 130 : 4 ; Isa. 43 : 25 ; 44 : 22 ; Jer. 50 : 20 ; Mark 2 : 7 ; Luke 5 : 21 ; Eph. 4 : 32 ; and that "when we have done all those things which are commanded us, we are unprofitable servants." Luke 17 : 10.

But the pope of Rome, a finite and sinful creature, claims the power of pardoning sins, and of granting indulgences, which are defined to be a remission of the temporal punishment due to sin by the decree of God, when its guilt and eternal punishment are remitted, and which may consist either of evil in this life, or of temporal suffering in the next—which temporal suffering is called purgatory. It is made an article of faith in the creed of Pius IV., "*that the power of indulgences was left by Christ to his church ; and that the use of them is very helpful to Christian people.*" Art. 22.

The Romish doctrine of indulgences is built upon the false foundation of purgatory, and the supererogations of the saints ; that is, their satisfying over and above what is needful for themselves and their own sins ; so that their satisfactions may serve for others who want them, or who have not enough of their own. That this doctrine has no foundation in the Bible, and consequently was not instituted by Jesus Christ, is acknowledged by some of the most learned Romanists themselves. See Bishop Taylor's Dissuasive from Popery, part 1, ch. 1. sect. 3. It is a fact, well attested in ecclesiastical history, that the power of granting indulgences was not claimed by the popes before the twelfth century, consequently it never was or could have been left by Christ to his church. It is also well known, that the profligate sale of indulgences by Leo X. led to the glorious Reformation, of which, under God, Luther was a distinguished instrument. Not to repeat earlier testimonies, it will be seen by the following extract from the bull of Leo XII., for the Jubilee of 1825, dated Rome, May 24, 1824, that the popes still usurp the prerogative

of Almighty God, in granting remission of sins. "During this year of Jubilee, we mercifully in the Lord grant and impart *the most plenary and complete indulgence, remission, and pardon of* ALL *their sins*, to all the faithful in Christ, of both sexes, who are truly penitent and have confessed, and who have refreshed themselves with the holy communion; provided, if Romans or inhabitants of the city, they shall have devoutly visited these churches of the city, that of the blessed Peter and Paul, of St. John Lateran, and of St. Mary Maggiore," or the greater, "at least once a day for thirty days, whether successive or interrupted, natural or even ecclesiastical; but if foreigners, or in any other respect strangers, they must have devoutly visited these churches at least fifteen days: provided also, that they shall have poured forth pious prayers to God for the *exaltation* of the holy church, the EXTIRPATION OF HERESIES, the concord of catholic princes, and the salvation and tranquillity of Christendom."

It is curious to see how the clause for the extirpation of heresies appears in the "Directions and Instructions, addressed to all the faithful in the London district, published by the R. R., the vicars apostolic." In the fourth condition required for gaining the Jubilee, p. 22, is the visiting of certain churches and offering up prayers "for the exaltation of the holy Catholic church throughout the world; *for bringing back all straying souls to the ways of unity and truth;* for the peace and concord of Christian princes; and for the general welfare of all Christian people, both for time and eternity." Query. Did his holiness, "the sovereign pontiff," in his bull, dated Dec. 25, 1825, for extending the jubilee, *soften* the original language above cited, in order to accommodate himself to the genius of Englishmen? Or was the clause for the *extirpation* of heresies differently translated, lest it should offend better educated members of the Romish church in the London district?

That indulgences have been *sold* since the time of Leo

X. for the commission of the most profligate crimes, has been proved by the unimpeachable testimony of Romish writers; and that they have been sold, and the proceeds thereof applied in *aid of rebellion against the lawful sovereign of Great Britain and Ireland*, the following anecdote from the history of the sister island will sufficiently attest. From the evidence communicated before a committee of the Irish parliament by father John Hennesy, it appears that his *holiness*, Pope Benedict XIII., in compliance with the request of the Romish archbishops and bishops of Ireland, who had conspired with others of the Romish communion to exterminate King George II. and the royal family, and to place the Pretender on the throne, issued his bull to facilitate their *pious* intention, and sent them an indulgence for ten years, in order to raise a sum of money to be speedily applied to restore James III. to his right. This bull further enjoined "that every communicant confessing and receiving upon the patron days of every respective parish, and any Sunday, from the first of May to September, having repeated the Lord's prayer five times, and once the apostle's creed, upon paying *two-pence* each time, was to have a *plenary indulgence for* ALL *their sins*." Under this holy bull it appears that the sum of fifteen hundred pounds sterling was ready to be remitted to the Pretender's agent in Flanders at the time the treasonable conspiracy was detected by the vigilance of the Irish government.

The testimonies of Romanist writers to the sale of indulgences may be seen in the Rev. Dr. Philpott's Letters to Mr. Butler, pp. 151–153; or in Dr. Hales' Analysis of Chronology, vol. 2, part 2, p. 1019–1022; and especially in "Taxatio Papalis; being an Account of the Tax-Books of the United Church and Court of Modern Rome." London, 1825, 8vo. That the scandalous traffic in indulgences has been carried on in later times, will be evident from the following facts.

"In the year 1709, a Bristol privateer captured a vessel from Spain, on her passage to America, which had on board upwards of three millions of these bulls of indulgence, which were to be

sold to the people in America, at various prices, from 20 pence for the poor, so high as £11 for the rich; and Captain Dampier told Bishop Burnet that they were so numerous that his sailors used them in careening the ship.

"In the year 1800, a Spanish ship from Europe was captured near the coast of South America by Admiral Harvey, then captain of the Southampton frigate. There were on board large bales of paper, valued in her books at £7,500. It was a matter of surprise to him to see them rated so high, and to hear the master of the captured vessel speak of them with great admiration: he examined them, and found them all filled with large sheets of paper, printed, some in Spanish, and some in Latin, but all sealed with the seals of the ecclesiastical courts in Spain or at Rome. These were indulgences or pardons for various sins mentioned in the Catholic rubric, and the price, which varied from half a dollar to seven dollars, was marked upon each. *They had been bought in Spain, and were intended for sale in South America.* At Tortola, some Dutch merchants bought the whole for £200, with the hope of being able to smuggle them among the Spaniards in America." Hamilton's Tracts, p. 68.

X. OF AURICULAR CONFESSION.

Auricular confession to a priest in private, required by the Council of Trent, and the catechism of the Romish church, is very different from the open, general, and public confession, which all Christians receive and practice. It is *contrary* to Scripture. James 5 : 16, upon which passage the custom has been principally enforced, refers only to confession in the miraculous cases of sickness, which were inflicted as temporal punishments in the days of the apostles. It is *contrary* to reason, that confession to a man should be demanded as the condition of the forgiveness of sin. Though, in some instances, the conscience may be relieved by confessing great crimes, and the penitent is commanded to confess his faults to those against whom he has offended, he is not commanded to confess to the priest, as an indispensable condition of the forgiveness of God. How contrary this antiscriptural tenet is to morality, and how it has been made subservient to plotting, propagating, and carrying on

treasonable propositions and designs, may be seen at length in Bishop Taylor's Dissuasive from Popery, part 2., book 1., sec. 11.

XI. DEPOSING POWER OF THE POPE.

The concluding article of Pius IVth's creed runs thus: "I also, without doubt, receive and profess *all other things* delivered, defined, and declared by the sacred canons and general councils, and especially by the *holy Council of Trent;* and all things contrary to them, with all heresies rejected and cursed by the church, I likewise reject, condemn, and curse."

Among these "sacred canons," to omit those of the Popes Boniface VIII. and Innocent III., cited at length by the Rev. Dr. Philpott, in his Letters to Mr. Butler, pp. 278–281, the following of the third and fourth Lateran councils are particularly worthy of notice.

The *third* Lateran council, which levelled its decree against those who were variously denominated Cathari, Patarenes, or publicans, in Gascony, the vicinity of Thoulouse, and other regions, subjects to a curse both themselves, their defenders, and harborers; and also, under a curse, prohibits all persons from admitting them into their houses, or receiving them upon their lands, or cherishing them, or exercising any trade with them. It further confiscates their goods, and freely permits princes to reduce them to slavery; and relaxes two years of enjoined penance to those faithful Christians, who, by the counsel of their bishops, shall take up arms against them, to subdue them by fighting against them. Labbei Concilia, tom. 10, p. 1522. The sixteenth decree of the same council prescribes that "*oaths which contravene the utility of the church*, and the constitutions of *the holy fathers, are not to be called oaths, but rather* PERJURIES."

The *fourth* Lateran council is even more precise in its denunciations. "Let secular powers, whatever office they

execute, *be admonished, persuaded, and, if necessary,* COMPELLED BY ECCLESIASTICAL CENSURE, that, as they desire to be reputed and accounted faithful, so they would publicly take an oath for the defence of the faith," that is, the dogmas of the Romish church, "that they would endeavor in good faith, according to their power, *to destroy all heretics marked by the church, out of the lands of their jurisdiction.* But if the temporal prince, being admonished and *required, shall neglect to purge his land from this heretical filthiness,* HE SHALL BE *excommunicated by the bishops of the province:* and, if he shall refuse to give satisfaction within a year, let it be signified to the pope, *that he may forthwith denounce his vassals absolved from their allegiance, and expose his land to be possessed by Catholics, who, having destroyed the heretics, may possess it without contradiction, and preserve it in the purity of the faith,* saving the right of the principal lord, whilst that he doth make no hinderance to it. Nevertheless, the same law is to be observed towards them who have no principal lord." Labbei Concilia, tom. 11, part 1, p. 148, can. 3, de Hæreticis.

It is, undeniably, the doctrine of the Romish church, that a general council, when convened and approved of by the pope, is empowered to pass laws *binding for ever* on its members; and since these laws, as they maintain, emanate from infallible authority, they are deemed equally binding with the divinely-inspired Scriptures. Now, the decrees of these two councils bear the impress of this authoritative sanction: they were confirmed by the then reigning pontiffs, and ratified by the Council of Trent; *they have never been abrogated,* and by the above-cited article of Pius IV. this creed was made an article of implicit belief. The pages of history sufficiently record the manner in which the depositions of sovereign princes, and the extermination of heretics, have been conducted by the "holy Catholic" pseudo "apostolic Roman church." To state the principal instances as briefly as possible:

Saint Gregory VII. twice anathematized and deposed the emperor Henry IV. In 1116 the emperor Henry V. was deposed by Paschal II.; John, king of England, by Innocent III. in 1210, and Raymond, count of Thoulouse, by the same pontiff, in 1215; the emperor Frederick II. by Innocent IV. in 1245; Peter, king of Arragon, by Martin IV. in 1283; Matthew, duke of Milan, in 1322, and Lewis of Bavaria, in 1324, by John XXII.; Barnabas, duke of Milan, by Urban V. in 1363; Alphonzo, king of Arragon, in 1425, by Martin V.; the king of Navarre, by Julius II. in 1512; Henry VIII. king of England, by Paul III. in 1538; Henry III. of France, in 1583, by Sixtus V., who, on hearing of this monarch's assassination by friar Jacques Clement, declared that the murderer's fervent zeal towards God surpassed that of Judith and Eleazar, and that the assassination was effected by Providence! In 1591, Gregory XIV., and in the following year the uncanonically elected pope Clement VII., issued bulls of deposition against Henry IV. king of France, whose life was first attempted by John Chastel, a Jesuit, then by a monk, and finally he was stabbed by Ravaillac. In 1569 *Saint* Pius V. deposed Queen Elizabeth, whose Romanist subjects he stimulated to rebel against her, and furnished some of them with money to aid their nefarious attempts: and bulls of deposition were fulminated against that illustrious queen, by Gregory XIII. in 1580, Sixtus V. in 1587, and Clement VIII. in 1600. Sixtus V., in his bull, styled her an usurper, a heretic, and an excommunicate; gave her throne to Philip II. of Spain, and *commanded* the English to join the Spaniards in dethroning her. Clement VIII., in 1600, issued a bull to prevent James I. ascending the throne of England, declaring that "when it should happen that that miserable woman," Queen Elizabeth, "should die, they," her subjects, "should admit none to the crown, though ever so nearly allied to it by blood, except they would not only tolerate the" Roman "Catholic religion, but promote it to the ut-

most of their power; and would, according to ancient custom, undertake upon oath to perform the same." In 1643, Urban VIII. issued a bull of deposition against Charles I. in Ireland; where, two years before, not fewer than 100,000 Protestants were massacred; and to those who had joined the rebellion of 1641, the same holy pontiff granted a *plenary indulgence.* In 1729, Benedict XIII., at the instance of the Romanist Irish prelates, issued a bull to dethrone George II. king of England, with an indulgence, as we have above seen, for raising money to support the Pretender. In 1768, Clement XIII. published a brief, on occasion of certain edicts issued by the duke of Parma and Placentia, in *his own dominions;* wherein the pontiff, in the plenitude of his usurped authority, abrogated, repealed, and annulled, as being prejudicial to the liberty, immunity, and jurisdiction of the church, whatever the duke had ordered in his edicts, and *forbade his subjects to obey* their sovereign; further depriving all, who had either published or obeyed the edicts, of all their privileges, and incapacitating them from receiving absolution, until they should fully and entirely have restored matters to their former condition, or should have made suitable satisfaction to the church, and to the holy see. In 1800, the late pope Pius VII. announced his election to the pontificate to Louis XVIII. as the lawful king of France; and in the following year he exhibited a most edifying instance of *papal duplicity,* when it suited his interest, by entering into a concordat with Bonaparte, in which, besides suppressing 146 episcopal and metropolitan sees, and dismissing their bishops and metropolitans without any form of judicature, he absolved all Frenchmen from their oaths of allegiance to their legitimate sovereign, and authorized an oath of allegiance to the first consul; and when Louis XVIII. sent his ambassador to Rome to present his credentials, the pontiff refused to receive him. With marvellous infallibility, however, not quite eight years after, the same pontiff issued a bull, in June 1809, excommunicat-

ing Bonaparte and all who adhered to him in his invasion of the papal states; in which bull he makes the same extravagant pretensions to supreme power which had been put forth by *Saint* Gregory VII., Innocent III., and other pontiffs.

One more instance may suffice to show the continuance not only of the papal pretensions to interfere with the temporal interests of mankind, but also of the readiness with which those pretensions are asserted whenever an opportunity presents itself. The secularization of certain German churches and chapters, in 1803, by the diet of Augsburg, which distributed some of them as indemnities to secular Protestant princes, gave occasion to many despatches from Rome, in the years 1803, 1804, and 1805, and particularly to an instruction to the papal nuncio resident at Vienna, in 1805, in which Pius VII. says, that the church had not only taken care to prohibit heretics from confiscating ecclesiastical possessions, but that she had moreover established, *as the penalty of the crime of heresy, the confiscation and the loss of all property* possessed by heretics. This penalty, as far as concerns the property of private individuals, is decreed, he says, by a bull of Innocent III., cap. Vergentes X. de Hæreticis; and, as far as concerns sovereignties and fiefs, it is a rule of the canon law, cap. Absolutus XVI. de Hæreticis, that the *subjects of a prince, manifestly heretical, are released from all obligation to him, dispensed from all allegiance and all homage.* "To be sure," his holiness goes on to say, "we are fallen into such calamitous times, that it is not possible for the spouse of Jesus Christ to practise, nor even expedient for her to recall her *holy maxims of just rigor against the enemies of the faith;* but, although she *cannot exercise her* RIGHT *of deposing heretics from their principalities, and declaring them deprived of their property,* yet can she for one moment allow that they should rob her of her property to aggrandize and enrich themselves? What an object of derision would she become to heretics

and infidels, who, in mocking her grief, would say that they had found out a way of making her *tolerant*." Essai Historique sur la Puissance Temporale des Papes, tom. 2, p. 320.

That Leo XII. did not relinquish his pretended right to *extirpate heresies*, is sufficiently intelligible from the extract from his bull for the jubilee given above, to which it may be added, that in the "Catechism for the Curates, composed by the decree of the Council of Trent, and published by command of Pope Pius V., faithfully translated into English *permissu superiorum*," it is expressly taught that "the heretics and schismatics, because they have fallen off from the church, nor do they belong [do not belong] to the church any more than vagabonds or renegadoes belong to an army from which they ran away: yet it is not to be denied but that they are *in the power of the church*, as those who may be judged by her and *condemned with an anathema*." P. 90, London edit. 1687. And in the class-book, taught in the Romanist college at Maynooth, which is supported by the bounty of the British parliament to the annual amount of £8,978, see the Act 7, Geo. IV., c. 79, § 11, the candidates for orders in the Romish church in Ireland are taught that "The church *retains its power* over all heretics, apostates, and schismatics, *though they may no longer belong to its body;* as a general may have a right to inflict punishment on a deserter, though his name is no longer on the muster-roll of the army." Tract de Theologia, ch. 8 de Membris, p. 404, cited in the Digest of Parliamentary Evidence, Part 1, p. 125.

XII. NO FAITH TO BE KEPT WITH HERETICS.

The doctrine that *no faith is to be kept with heretics*, was established by the Council of Constance: and history abundantly testifies how religiously the iniquitous decree of that council has been observed. Not to insist upon the numerous plots and conspiracies against the reformed religion in

Great Britain, from its establishment to the memorable gunpowder conspiracy, and the Irish conspiracy in 1729; witness the martyrdom of John Huss, who, though he had a safe conduct from the *emperor* Sigismund, guaranteeing his *free* access to the Council of Constance, and his free return from it, was nevertheless imprisoned there; and, after a process on a charge of heresy, was condemned and burnt to death, in violation of every law, human and divine. Witness the massacre of St. Bartholomew, in 1572, when 500 Protestant gentlemen, and 10,000 of the lower classes, were assassinated at Paris, and not fewer than 40,000 in the provinces; at which pious tidings, Gregory XIII. was so overjoyed that he commanded a discharge of artillery to be made, ordered the cardinals to return solemn thanks to Almighty God, and caused a medal to be struck in honor of the unprincipled transaction. Witness also the massacre of 1641, in Ireland, where, as in France, sixty-nine years before, no ties of nature or of friendship could prevent papists from embruing their hands in the blood of their nearest Protestant relations. To these instances may be added the unprincipled revocation of the sacred and irrevocable edict of Nantes, by Louis XIV., against the faith of the most solemn treaties, in consequence of which the Protestant churches were destroyed throughout France; the soldiers committed the most scandalous excesses; and after the loss of innumerable lives, 50,000 of the most valuable and industrious of the citizens of France were forced into exile. Once more, in 1712, when by virtue of the treaty of Alt-Rastadt certain places were to be surrendered to some Protestant princes, Pope Clement XI., in a letter to the Emperor Charles VI., denounced the Protestants as "an execrable sect," and in the plenitude of his pretended supremacy declared that every thing, which either was or could be construed or esteemed to be in any way obstructive of, or in the least degree prejudicial to, the Romish faith or worship, or to the authority, jurisdiction, or any rights of the

church whatsoever, "to be, and to have been, and perpetually to remain hereafter null, unjust, reprobated, void, and evacuated of all force from the beginning; and that no person is bound to the observance of them, although the same have been repeated, ratified, or secured *by oath*." Digest of Evidence on the State of Ireland, Part 2, p. 243.

Such are the dogmas of the *church of Rome*, and such has been her practice for many centuries. *Individuals* of high character, belonging to her communion, have disclaimed them; but they remain *unrescinded* by the united church *and* court of modern Rome. These doctrines—the contrariety of which to Scripture, reason, and in many instances, to morality, cannot but have powerfully struck the reader's mind—have been promulgated by popes, councils, and canonists: they must be rescinded by the same authorities before Protestants can consent to give up those securities upon which their civil and religious liberties depend. Have we any concern for pure and undefiled religion, for the liberties of our country, and for the welfare of our children and posterity? Let us then stand fast in the liberty wherewith Christ has made us free; and "let *the word of Christ*," and not human traditions, "dwell in us richly in all wisdom." Col. 3 : 16. "For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is *Jesus Christ*." 1 Cor. 3 : 11. "We have renounced the hidden things of dishonesty; not walking in craftiness, nor handling the word of God deceitfully; but, by manifestation of the truth, commending ourselves to every man's conscience in the sight of God." 2 Cor. 4 : 2. "If any man teach otherwise, and consent not to wholesome words, even the words of our Lord Jesus Christ, and to the doctrine which is according to godliness, *from such withdraw thyself*." 1 Tim. 6 : 3, 5.

No. 256.

POOR SWAIZELAND.

AN AUTHENTIC NARRATIVE.

BY A CLERGYMAN.

In the month of December, 1817, as I was on a visit at the house of a lady in Kent, England, her daughter requested that I would accompany her to visit a man who had met with a serious accident.

I walked with her to a little cottage on Rowly-Common, in a room of which a poor young man was lying, under what appeared to me almost the extremity of human suffering. He was a mason, and had been precipitated from a scaffolding about twenty feet high. He was grievously mutilated by the fall; both his legs were broken, and several of his ribs, and his spine was so greatly injured that from the pit of his stomach to his feet he appeared perfectly dead, and insensible to pain.

When I saw him he had been a year in this condition; but though his bones had been set, the injury in his spine precluded the possibility of his moving to turn in his bed, or of remaining on his side, if placed there by his attendant; so that, being obliged to lie continually on his back, it had, in some places, at different times, become very sore and painful. He was dependent on charity for subsistence, and had been placed in this cottage, with an old woman to attend him. When I saw him he was pale and emaciated; but he did not complain of bodily pain: the anguish of his body seemed lost in that of his mind.

He had been a profligate; and the conviction of his guilt, the apprehension of God's wrath, and the dread of approaching judgment, seemed to absorb every feeling of his heart. He said he felt as if God were holding him over the pit of hell, and he did not know the moment when he would let him drop; that he had been trying to prepare himself to die, and make his peace with God, but felt wholly unable to do so; that he had made many promises and resolutions to lead a different life, if God would raise him up; but that he should never rise from his bed, and these promises would be of no avail to him.

I endeavored to explain to him, that while he failed of going to Christ for pardon, he was setting about the work of making his peace with God in a very false way; that all his resolutions of amendment in his external conduct would be vain, without the aids of divine grace; that if he were even restored to health, and could put them fully into practice, they would be of no avail to give peace to his conscience, or salvation to his soul. I endeavored to show him, from the Scriptures, that the work which he was vainly laboring to do, in his own strength, had been finished for the chief of sinners, by Him who died upon the cross.

I endeavored, in various ways, to illustrate this, and to show him, that the effort to appease the wrath of his offended God, by any resolutions, or any righteousness of his own, would be as vain as those of a poor mutilated, bed-

ridden pauper, to earn money to discharge a debt of a thousand pounds. I told him that the Lord Jesus had paid the mighty debt for those who believe in him, and who could never hope to discharge it themselves; that he had, by his righteousness, fulfilled that holy law of God, which we have broken; that he had, by his precious death upon the cross, stood in our place, and borne our curse; and that the message which he commanded his ministers to proclaim to sinners, was a message of free and full pardon. That, instead of vainly attempting to work out a righteousness of their own, perishing sinners should "look unto him and be saved;" that, having died for them, they might be delivered from every terror of death, of judgment, and of hell, and be saved by his merits; that therefore I came to him with these "good-tidings of great joy:" that, though he had been wicked, and profligate, and vile, yet the Gospel declares, that "the blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth from all sin;" that, "though our sins be as scarlet, they shall be white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool."

The poor man listened to these, and many similar truths, with deep anxiety, but I could not perceive that he seemed either fully to understand, or derive from them that consolation which they are calculated to give. I kneeled by him, and prayed that the Holy Spirit would teach him to understand and rest upon this hope set before him, and then bade him farewell.

The next day I visited him, and found him in the same state of mind; I read to him, and endeavored to set the same truths again before him, as plainly and simply as I could. I prayed with him again, but again left him without any perceptible change in his feelings.

The third day his countenance wore the same rueful aspect, both when I entered and when I left the room.

But on the fourth morning, as soon as I opened the door of his room, a very different scene presented itself. He seemed to have been awaiting my arrival with anxiety—his countenance was illuminated with a smile of peace, and

hope, and joy—and before I could even ask him how he was, he burst out, as soon as he saw me,

"O, sir, now I understand all you have been saying to me. When I was thinking over it this morning, it came into my mind at once—if he has died for us—if he has paid our debt—then we have not to pay it ourselves—we may depend on him and rejoice."

"Yes, my dear friend," said I, "that is indeed the glorious truth of the Gospel; he has died for us, and we may rest on him and be at peace."

I then opened the Scriptures, and began to read the fifth chapter of the Epistle to the Romans: "Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God, through our Lord Jesus Christ."

"Oh yes, sir," said he, "that's true, so we have; now I understand it."

I went on—"By whom also we have access, by faith, into this grace wherein we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God."

"O yes, sir," said he, "that's true, we do; we do rejoice, sir, and so we may rejoice, since he has paid our debt, and done all for us."

I went on through a great portion of the chapter, and it was wonderful to see how this poor man, to whom, the day before, the Bible was a sealed book, who had listened with attention, indeed, and anxiety, but without comprehending the truths that were read to him, seemed now to have an intuitive perception of the spiritual import of the whole; and instead of requiring a comment from me, could give me a practical, and a most instructive comment on almost every word I read.

The knowledge of Jesus, as the hope and refuge of the sinner's soul, is, indeed, the key of the Bible. Like the sun arising on a world of darkness, it pours its light on all that was unseen before. It was this that enabled this poor, unlettered man, not only to understand, but to comment on the Scripture as he went along.

For about a month after this I visited him, read to him, and conversed and prayed with him, almost every day. I never saw another cloud upon his brow, nor heard another expression of the fear of death or hell from his lips: the triumphant passages of the Psalms, and of the prophets, were now the natural expressions of his feelings; and I can truly say, that, during all that time, I rather derived instruction from seeing the power of the Gospel so practically applied to cheer and enlighten and support a fellow-sinner, under the deep distress of poverty and bodily anguish, than conveyed to him increasing edification, by any thing that I could say.

I took one day two young boys, the sons of noblemen, to see him, with the hope of making some impression on their minds. I told him who they were. I mentioned the rank and riches of their families. I asked him, in their presence, whether he would exchange his poverty, his pain, and the prospect of suffering and death that was before him, for their health and strength, and the titles and riches of their fathers, without that blessed hope which cheered and comforted his heart. He smiled at my question, and as his head and arms were the only parts of his body he could move, he shook his head, and assured them he would not make the exchange, with an emphasis which, in his circumstances, poured more contempt on all that the world could give, compared with the glorious hope of the everlasting Gospel, than all the studied eloquence the pulpit ever could command.

I was then obliged to leave that part of the country; but after about two months I went down into Kent, and found him in the same happy frame of mind. He told me, that no doubt or fear, concerning the all-sufficiency of his adorable Redeemer, had crossed his mind; he still continued to go on his way rejoicing, though his bodily sufferings were just as when I had seen him before. I read and prayed with him, and read over several hymns, which before had given him particular pleasure; and having stayed with him

as long as time permitted, I bade him farewell, thinking that a very few weeks would bring him to the haven of eternal rest.

In the course of previous conversations, he had told me the various struggles of his mind, in the efforts he had made by his various resolutions to obtain peace of conscience, and satisfy his offended God for sin.

A person who had visited him, had told him that he ought to feel very sorry for his sins, and endeavor by sincere contrition to obtain the favor of God; but without pointing him to the sacrifice of Christ, and faith in his blood, as his only hope.

"I often strove," said he, "to feel very sorry; but when I thought I had got myself to be very much grieved for my offences, I found my heart going back, and taking as much pleasure in them as ever. This gentleman," said he, "also advised me to receive the sacrament, as a means of making my peace with God; but I would not do it." An expression which he made use of on this occasion, evinced great ignorance of that sacred ordinance; and I endeavored to explain to him the nature of it: that it was given by our Lord to those who believe on him, for a continual remembrance of his great salvation, that he had died for them, and finished all their transgressions; but that, when used as a substitute for Christ and his salvation, as if it could atone for our offences, it ceased to be an ordinance of true religion, and was turned, by such a perversion, into an idolatrous superstition.

When I bade him farewell, on our last interview, he expressed what pleasure he had lost, after my departure from Kent, in not having any person to read the Bible to him; for the old woman who attended him read so very imperfectly, that he could hardly understand her, and he himself unhappily had never learned.

I cheered him, however, with the reflection, that though he could not read, he could pray; and that the promise of Christ was not, "He that readeth shall be saved," but, "He

that *believeth* shall be saved." Bidding him farewell, I set out soon after for Ireland. This was in March, 1818.

In December of that year, I engaged a friend to visit the cottage of my poor brother, to inquire whether he had entered into rest, or that he might cheer and comfort his heart, with the communion of one who rejoiced in the same salvation. He found him still living; still lying on his back, in the same spot on which I had left him; still rejoicing in his Lord, and drawing water out of the wells of salvation. He had, in the interval from the preceding March, learned his letters, learned to spell, and learned to read his Bible.

I thought this was the last account I should ever hear of poor Swaizeland; but in April, 1821, I went to London, and soon after to Kent, to visit my friend. It was on Thursday, and, at a miller's cottage on the heath, I was informed that on the day but one before, he had entered into his everlasting rest.

Having learned, that the old woman who had attended him, lived in a cottage just beside the mill, I inquired of her concerning him.

"When I went to him first," said she, "he was such an impatient, wicked-tempered man, that it was impossible to live with him; but a gentleman came to read the Bible to him, for some days, and after that he became like a child, so that it grieved my heart to leave him."

The old lady did not recognize me, but her testimony is of great value, to show that the Gospel of Jesus, when simply received into the heart, is not only the power of God unto salvation, but also transforms the vilest character, and turns him, who had before been a servant of Satan, into a son and servant of the living God.

We went on to the cottage where his remains were lying; the door was opened by his sister, who had, for some time, attended him; she was a widow, with five children. I asked her for her brother.

She told me he was dead.

"How did he die?" said I.

"In great peace with God, sir," said she.

"What gave him that peace?" I asked.

"Oh, sir," she said, "he depended on the blood of the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ."

"Well," said I, "how can that give peace?"

"Oh, sir," said she, smiling, and expressing herself with joyful confidence, "surely, if a person depends on Jesus, he may die very happy."

"And pray, my friend," said I, "who taught you this?"

"Oh, sir," she replied, "it was my dear brother, who is gone."

She then expressed the joy that she felt at having been called to attend him during his lingering illness, and the blessings which his instructions had conveyed to her soul. "I hear," said I, "that he learned to read before he died."

"O yes, sir," she answered, "and to write too! I have several hymns of his writing."

I entreated her to give me one, but she had lent them all to a gentleman in London; he had learned to write, lying on his back, with a pencil and a slate.

I went to see his remains: I could not have recognized his features; he was worn to a skeleton; his limbs were all contracted, and shrivelled to the very bone; but he had fled to Him who dwelleth where the inhabitants shall no more say, "I am sick;" "who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body, according to the mighty working whereby he is able to subdue all things unto himself."

"Reader, may'st thou obtain like precious faith,
To smile in anguish, and rejoice in death."

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"LIFE FROM THE DEAD."

AN AUTHENTIC NARRATIVE.

"HOW CAN A MAN BE BORN WHEN HE IS OLD?"—JOHN 3 : 4.

J—— H——, Esq., is a respectable resident in one of the most picturesque and delightful villages in the northern states of America. He is now, 1833, turned of seventy years of age; is a man of more than ordinary natural powers, and in his youth enjoyed the advantages of a good academical education. Possessing an active mind, and an ardent temperament, he never was an idle spectator of passing events. This disposition, with a ready utterance, which enabled him to speak on all occasions without embarrassment, led him to engage with ardor in political disputes, and on every subject his influence was felt. He was one of that class of men who must *take sides*, and who are constitutionally inclined to do with all their might whatever they undertake. In his hours of relaxation from business he was always seen in warm debate with such as were inclined to dispute with him, or zealously giving his opinions to those who were accustomed to look upon him as their oracle. In these conversations religion was frequently his topic. This was a subject which occupied many of his thoughts, and in relation to which, until his fifty-seventh year, he cherished all the deep-rooted opposition which usually characterizes open infidels. So great, indeed, was his contempt for the Gospel, that he could hardly speak of those who professed it with candor. He was often heard to ridicule the experience of new converts, and to speak in scoffing terms of those who had acquired the most unexceptionable character of piety. He despised the preaching of the Gospel, and, though born of parents who early taught him to reverence the Sabbath and the sanctuary, he had not for many years been seen in the house of God, except

at funerals, and he generally prevented his family from attending public worship.

Thus placing himself beyond the influence of restraint, casting off fear, and living with neighbors who, in general, were careless, he indulged in the most revolting use of profane language. The practice of using oaths became so habitual to him, that he seldom uttered a sentence without taking the name of God in vain. He spent most of his Sabbaths and evenings in ridiculing religion, and in defending various systems of infidelity. Sometimes he was a Deist: he would reject the Bible, but profess to believe in the being of a God, and the immortality of the soul. At other times he would strenuously urge the probability that death would be the end of his being. But his sentiments were more permanently those of a Universalist of the common stamp. Here was a system peculiarly congenial to his feelings. It spread before him, in prospect, all that his ardent mind could desire, while it imposed no unpleasant restraint upon his life. Tired, therefore, with being blown about with every wind of doctrine, he determined to repose in his sins, under the soothing prospect that, whatever his life might be, all would be well with him at the last. But, possessing a mind that was never satisfied to adopt an opinion without what he considered to be proof, he found it necessary to muster his strong arguments. He furnished himself with books for the purpose, and seized upon all the wit and ridicule by which the doctrines of universal salvation have usually been defended; and to give his system the appearance of authority, he searched the Bible, and selected passages, and arranged them with great diligence into a system. But I have heard him say, "Miserable comforters were they all!" Yet, in the common acceptation of the words, he was an *honest* man, frank, ingenuous, and open-hearted; and often congratulated himself, and boasted in the presence of others, that he was no *hypocrite!* But J—— H—— had a *conscience*, from which his early impressions of religious truth were never entirely effaced—a *conscience* too, which, he is now convinced, was often stimulated to the work of reproof by the strivings of the Holy Spirit. He was a champion of the system he had adopted, but his mind was "like the troubled sea when it cannot rest."

Mr. H—— was now fifty-six years of age. His char-

acter presented the melancholy picture of a man of respectability and influence trusting his own soul to a refuge of lies, teaching the language of profaneness to a numerous family, and leading a multitude after him to perdition. Who would have said that this man would ever be a Christian? "Can the Ethiopian change his skin, or the leopard his spots? Then may they also do good that are accustomed to do evil."

In 1819 the minister of the place was dismissed, and removed to another field of labor. His successor arrived a total stranger, and the next day, being the Sabbath, began to deliver the Lord's message to the people. Among his hearers was the man whom we have described above. His intelligent countenance, the fixedness of his posture, and the vivid flash of his eye, caught the attention of the preacher, and peculiarly interested his feelings. "I was never sensible," said he, "of sending forth my whole soul with so much solicitude in prayer for a stranger, while, as yet, I was entirely unacquainted with his character and condition." The new minister had a desire to know him, and embraced the first opportunity to inquire his name and character. To his unspeakable surprise he was informed that it was the profane Mr. H——, who had attended church before but once or twice in eleven years, and that all his apparent interest in the discourse alluded to, was probably only that of a determined opposer. On returning from the house of worship he was heard to utter an expression too profane to be repeated. Shocked with this intelligence, the minister began to reflect upon himself for having urged with so much confidence the salvation of a soul, upon whom, it now seemed probable, that, on account of his rejection of the truth, "God had sent strong delusions, that he might believe a lie," and be lost for ever. He had but little reason to hope for another opportunity of preaching the Gospel to Mr. H——, still he could not quite give him up, and prayed that it might be otherwise than he feared. The next Sabbath Mr. H—— was among his hearers; and from that day to the present, (thirteen years,) he has not failed a single Sabbath, when not detained by sickness, of being regularly and in season at the house of God.

His attendance, at first, was doubtless secured by the following circumstances. Having once attended, as above

related, a careless neighbor bantered him on the subject; when, on the spur of the moment, he swore he would be present more times in six months than his neighbor! From this time neither of them lost an opportunity of outdoing his antagonist, until, by the time the other had given up the unholy contest, Mr. H—— had something fastened on his mind which bound him to the sanctuary far more strongly than his profane oath, with all the irreverent curses by which it was accompanied.

During this time the new minister had commenced, in a series of connected discourses, a discussion of the doctrines of natural religion, which led him often to notice and refute the cavils of infidels. From this he proceeded to the evidences of revelation, and embodied and urged that system of arguments which irresistibly proves the divine authority of the Bible. The ardent and penetrating mind of Mr. H—— was led captive, and his interest in the subject grew as the discussion advanced, while the preacher thought he could perceive indications of increasing anxiety within. But to those who conversed with him during the week, it was manifest that, notwithstanding his apparent feeling, his heart was still at enmity with God. He would roughly assail the arguments of the preacher in the hearing of others, and several times he accosted the minister with opposing sentiments. But the minister scrupulously avoided entering into disputes with him, and was accustomed to leave him with some solemn remark on the necessity of pardon through the blood of Christ.

After several months, the weakness of the arguments by which this profane man had sustained his infidel scheme, became apparent to his own mind. The sunbeams of truth had fallen on his dark soul, and scattered the mists of error by which he had been deluded. His own wickedness reproved him. He saw that, with the word of God in his hand, he had unwisely formed his opinions and constructed his system of theology independent of its authority. He began to restrain his infidel wit and cavillings; and one day, while passing from the church, he remarked with an oath, unconscious of the dreadful inconsistency of the expression, that he believed religion a good thing, and that he meant to seek it. Soon after this, stung with a sense of the scandal he had brought on himself and family by his long neglect

of the sanctuary, he strictly enjoined it on his children to attend worship every Sabbath; yet in urging upon them and others the importance of religion, his conversation was often interspersed with oaths and profaneness too shocking to be repeated. Indeed, the habit of using profane language had become so familiar to him, that for a considerable time after his mind was evidently impressed, he seemed insensible that he was mingling with his religious remarks the very dialect of hell. Of this he was, at length, reminded. He trembled at the consequences of a sin so wanton and senseless, and one of his first efforts at reformation was a determination to leave off swearing. To assist him in this purpose, he invited his neighbors to reprove him whenever they heard him use an oath. This they had frequent occasion to do, till in a few weeks he subdued a habit which had acquired the strength of years.

Having thus succeeded in this and several other points of external reformation, Mr. H—— trusted in himself that he should be righteous. But his prospect darkened as he proceeded, and the gulf, upon whose brink he had sported away a long life, seemed to yawn wider and wider, the more he attempted, in his own strength, to escape its dangers. His conflicts with particular sinful habits, on whose extermination he was resolved, convinced him that they were not alone, but belonged to a legion within, which remained yet to be subdued. He perceived that all his laborious attempts at external reformation had not even touched the seat of his malady, and that so long as the fountain of his heart remained uncleansed, it would continue to send forth bitter streams. These streams had now become wormwood and gall to his taste. He was oppressed with a deep sense of his guilt before God. He ceased to talk of outward reformation. He was ashamed, and blushed to lift up his face even to a fellow-mortal in justification of any thing he had ever done. He retired from the society of those with whom he had been accustomed to converse with fluency on the externals of religion. His whole soul was now engaged. So severe was his distress, that he loathed his necessary food, and his sleep forsook him in the night season. The chills of despair came over him. His countenance was cast down to the earth, his flesh was wasting away, and serious apprehensions were entertained by his

friends as to the result upon his bodily health. He remained in this situation about two weeks, during which time his convictions of sin were constantly increasing, and he found no comfort in Christ. At length he called one morning upon the minister who was now settled in the parish, by whom he was met at the door. The minister took him by the hand, and inquired after his health. "Oh," said he, "I am a poor creature; there is nothing for me but misery, in this world, or in the world to come;" and wept aloud. The minister was overpowered, and unable to command his feelings sufficiently to reply; and, unmindful of the notice of those who might be passing, he stood in the door and wept with him. He has often related the story, and said, "I was never conscious of feeling so deeply a sense of the goodness of God, and of my own littleness, as when I saw that gray-headed sinner before me, bathed in tears; that hackneyed transgressor, who had daringly trampled on Sabbaths, and sermons, and prayers, and the Son of God himself, now, in the evening of his life, so humbled by the power of the Highest, that he would come to *me* for counsel."

The minister soon regained his self-possession, and invited his new and welcome guest to his chamber, where he knelt down with him and prayed, and rose up and preached Christ crucified for the remission of sins. Mr. H—— was convulsed with grief. "Oh," said he, "there can be no pardon for me; I have been such a wretch, not only in spurning the offers of mercy myself, but in teaching my dear family to despise religion. I have been angry with them, and abused them when they have sometimes stolen away from me, and found their way to the sanctuary of the Lord's house. And I have been offended with my wife, who has often remained in her room alone, I knew not for what purpose, after I had retired to my bed. She now tells me, what she never dared mention before, that *she used to sit up to pray for me.* Oh, it is too much to be forgiven!" The minister replied, "It can be forgiven, Mr. H——. 'It is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, even the chief.' Believe this; go and plead it before the throne of God, and be willing to be any thing, that you may promote his glory." Mr. H—— listened with deep feeling; he partly believed,

but his proud heart could not yet consent entirely to give up his boasted self-righteousness. The interview closed, and he departed, having yet no peace in believing. But the Spirit of God had begun a good work in his soul. He remained in the deep waters until the following Sabbath. Then, as he listened to the message of grace through the blood of Christ, a ray of hope lighted upon his heart.

It had now begun to be a time of revival in the church, and others around were asking what they must do to be saved. A conference meeting was held on the Sabbath evening, which was numerously attended, and Mr. H—— was present. After a powerful address by the pastor, he arose and requested liberty to speak. With eyes filled with tears, and in broken sentences, he proceeded nearly in the following words:

"My friends and neighbors—I am now fifty-eight years of age, and during the whole of my life I have served the enemy of souls; and you are witnesses for me that I have done it zealously. I am now determined, in humble reliance on the grace of God, that I will serve the Lord as zealously all the remnant of my days. And I humbly ask an interest in the prayers of God's people here, that I may be sustained in this resolution. I have been esteemed a man of truth, and so I have been, in all my intercourse with the world, and you had reason to believe me, when I used to say I was a Universalist. I tried to be a Universalist, and tried to be a Deist, and once thought I was one. But, my friends, I was not. I never was either. I had no rest anywhere, I never was any thing but an enemy to God. And I now humbly ask your pardon for the injury I have done you and the cause of Christ, by my example, and by all my profane conversation on these subjects. I now put all my confidence in Jesus Christ, and choose him as my portion."

He was at length overcome by his feelings, and was compelled to sit down. The effect on the meeting was visible. Great fear came upon all, and every body said that the power which could effect such a change must be divine. He had already established family prayer, which he has ever since continued regularly. He is now an ardent, persevering Christian; and all who remember his former state, contemplate his present character with wonder.

"Great is the work, my neighbors cried,
And own'd thy power divine;
Great is the work, my heart replied,
And be the glory thine."

Thus may "a man be born when he is old," by the regenerating and sanctifying power of the Holy Spirit, making him a new creature in Christ Jesus, a willing servant of the Lord. And he, to whom Christ has forgiven much, will *love* much, and strive to *do* much for the glory of God. The happy consequences of the new birth of the subject of this narrative have already been witnessed in the conversion of five of his children, who, together with himself and his aged companion, are now members of the same church. Two extensive revivals of religion have since been enjoyed in that place, which have added to the number of the professed followers of Christ more than two hundred and fifty souls. Many of these will doubtless praise God in eternity for the fervent prayers and zealous activity of the aged, but prompt and laborious J—— H——; and if the Father of mercies, in answer to the prayer of the writer, shall deign to bless this Tract to the souls of its readers, tens of thousands may hereafter be converted through its instrumentality; and "*what shall the receiving of them be, but* LIFE FROM THE DEAD?" Rom. 11 : 15.

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No. 258.

THREE QUERIES

TO

THE REJECTERS OF CHRISTIANITY.

BY REV. ANDREW FULLER.

I. *How came you to renounce Christianity, and to imbibe your present principles?*

Retrace the process of your mind, and ask your conscience, as you proceed, whether all was fair and upright? Nothing is more common, than for persons of relaxed morals to attribute their change of conduct to a change of sentiments or views relative to certain subjects. It is galling to one's own feelings, and mean in the account of others, *to act against principle;* but if a person can once persuade himself to think favorably of those things which he has formerly accounted sinful, and can furnish a plea for them which, at least, may serve to parry the censures of mankind, he will feel much more at ease, and be able to put on a better face when he mingles with society. Whatever inward stings may annoy his peace under certain occasional qualms, yet he has not to reproach himself, nor can others reproach him, with such inconsistency of character as in former instances. *Rousseau* confesses he found in the reasonings of a certain lady, with whom he lived in the greatest possible familiarity, all those ideas *which he had occasion for.* Have you not found the same in the conversation and writings of Deists? Did you not, previously to your rejection of Christianity, indulge in vicious courses; and while indulging in these courses, did not its holy precepts and

awful threatenings gall your spirits? Were you not like a person gathering forbidden fruit amidst showers of arrows; and had you not recourse to your present principles for a shield against them? If you cannot honestly answer these questions in the negative, you are in an evil case. You may flatter yourself for a while that perhaps there may be no hereafter, or at least, no judgment to come; but you know the time is not far distant when you must go and see; and then, if you should be mistaken, what will you do?

Perhaps you are descended from godly parents, and have had a religious education. Has not your infidelity arisen from the dislike which you conceived in early life to religious exercises? Family worship was a weariness to you; and the cautions, warnings, and counsels which were given you, instead of having any proper effect, only irritated your corruptions. You longed to be from under the yoke. Since that time your parents, it may be, have been removed by death; or if they live, they may have lost their control over you. So now you are free. But still, something is wanting to erase the *prejudices* of education, which, in spite of all your efforts, will accompany you, and imbitter your present pursuits. For this purpose, a friend puts into your hands some deistical composition. You read it with avidity. This is the very thing you wanted. You have long suspected the truth of Christianity, but had not courage to oppose. Now then you are a philosopher; yes, a philosopher! "Our fathers," say you, "might be well-meaning people, but they were imposed upon by priests. The world gets more *enlightened* nowadays. There is no need of such rigidness. The Supreme Being, if there be one, can never have created the pleasures of life but for the purpose of enjoyment. Avaunt, ye self-denying casuists; Nature is the law of man!"

Was not this, or something nearly resembling it, the process of your mind? Are you now satisfied? I do not ask whether you have been able to defend your cause against assailants, or whether you have gained converts to

your way of thinking: you may have done both; but are you satisfied with yourself? Do you really believe yourself to be in the right way? Have you no misgivings of heart? Is there not something within you that occasionally whispers, "My parents were righteous, and I am wicked. O that my soul was in their souls' stead?"

Ah, young man, if such be the occasional revolutions of your own mind, what are you doing in laboring to gain others over to your way of thinking? Can you, from experience, honestly promise them peace of mind? Can you go about to persuade them that there is no hell, when, if you would speak the truth, you must acknowledge that you have already an earnest of it kindled in your own bosom? If counsels were not lost upon you, I would entreat you to be contented with destroying your own soul. Have pity on your fellow-creatures, if you have none upon yourself. Nay, spare yourself so much, at least, as not to incur the everlasting execrations of your most intimate acquaintance. If Christianity should prove what your conscience, in your most serious moments, tells you it is, you are doing this every day of your life.

II. *How is it, that almost all your writers, at one time or other, bear testimony in favor of Christianity?*

It were easy to collect from those very writings which were designed to undermine the Christian religion, hundreds of testimonies in its favor. *Voltaire* and *Rousseau*, as is well known, have, at times, gone far towards contradicting all which they have written against it. *Bolingbroke* has done the same. Such sentences as the following may be found in his publications: "Supposing Christianity to have been a human invention, it has been the most amiable invention that ever was imposed on mankind for their good. Christianity, as it came out of the hand of God, if I may use the expression, was a most simple and intelligible rule of belief, worship, and manners, which is the true notion of religion. The Gospel, in all cases, is one continued lesson of the strictest morality, of justice, of benevolence, and of

universal charity." *Paine*, perhaps, has said as little in this way as any of your writers, yet he has professed respect for the character of Jesus Christ. "He was," says he, "a virtuous and an amiable man. The morality that he preached and practised was of the most benevolent kind."

In what manner will you attempt to account for these concessions? Christian writers, those at least who are sincerely attached to the cause, are not seized with these fits of inconsistency. How is it that yours, like the worshippers of Baal, should thus be continually cutting themselves with knives?

You must either give up your leaders, as a set of men who, while they were laboring to persuade the world of the hypocrisy of priests, were themselves the most infamous of all hypocrites; or, which will be equally fatal to your cause, you must attribute it to occasional convictions which they felt and expressed, though contrary to the general strain of their writings. Is it not an unfavorable character of your cause, that in this particular it exactly resembles that of vice itself? Vicious men will often bear testimony in favor of virtue, especially on the near approach of death; but virtuous men never return the compliment by bearing testimony in favor of vice. We are not afraid of Christians thus betraying their cause: but neither your writers nor your conscience are to be trusted in a serious hour.

III. *How comes it to pass that your principles fail, as they are frequently known to do, in a dying hour?*

It is a rule with wise men, *so to live as they shall wish they had lived when they come to die.* How do you suppose you shall wish you had lived in that day? Look at the deaths of your greatest men, and see what their principles have done for them at last. Mark the end of that apostle and high-priest of your profession, *Voltaire;* and try if you can find in it either integrity, or hope, or any thing that should render it an object of envy. The following particulars, among many others, are recorded of this

writer, by his biographer, *Condorcet*, a man after his own heart.

1. That he conceived the design of overturning the Christian religion, and that by his own hand. "I am wearied," said he, "of hearing it repeated, that twelve men were sufficient to establish Christianity; and I wish to prove there needs but one to destroy it."

2. That in pursuit of this object he was threatened with a prosecution, to avoid which he received the sacrament, and publicly declared his respect for the church, and his disdain for his detractors, namely, those who had called in question his Christianity!

3. That in his last illness in Paris, being desirous of obtaining what is called Christian burial, he sent for a priest, to whom he declared that he "died in the Catholic faith, in which he was born."

4. That another priest, curate of the parish, troubled him with questions. Among other things, he asked, "Do you believe in the divinity of Jesus Christ?" "In the name of God, sir," replied *Voltaire*, "speak to me no more of that man, but let me die in peace."

Why is it that so many of you faint in the day of trial? If your cause were good, you would defend it with uprightness, and die with inward satisfaction. But is it so? A Deist may flatter himself that his principles will bear him up in the prospect of death; and it is possible that he may brave it out as it is said *David Hume* did. Such instances, however, are rare. For one unbeliever that maintains his courage, many might be produced whose hearts have failed them, and who have trembled for the consequences of their infidelity.

On the other hand, you cannot produce a single instance of a Christian *who, at the approach of death, was troubled or terrified in his conscience for having been a Christian.* Many have been afraid in that day, lest their faith in Christ should not prove genuine; but who that has put his trust in him, was ever known to be apprehensive lest he should

at last deceive him? Can you account for that difference? If you have discovered the true religion, and Christianity be all fable and imposture, how comes it to pass that the issue of things is what it is? Do gold, and silver, and precious stones perish in the fire, and do wood, and hay, and stubble endure it?

I have admitted that a Deist may possibly brave it out till the last; but if he does, his courage may be merely assumed. Pride will induce men to disguise the genuine feelings of their hearts on more occasions than one. We hear much of courage among duellists; but little credit is due to what they say, if, while the words proceed from their lips, we see them approach each other with paleness and trembling. Your own writers admit, "the Power that called us into being, can, if he pleases, and when he pleases, call us to account for the manner in which we live here; and therefore, without seeking any farther motive for the belief, it is rational to believe that he will, for we know beforehand that he can."

Let this hypothesis be admitted, and that in its lowest form, that there is only a *possibility* of a judgment to come: this is sufficient to evince your folly, and, if you thought on the subject, to destroy your peace. This alone has induced many infidels in their last moments to wish that they had lived like Christians. If it be possible that there may be a judgment to come, why should it not be equally possible that Christianity itself may be true? And if it should, on what ground do you stand? If it be otherwise, Christians have nothing to fear. While they are taught "to deny ungodliness and worldly lusts, and live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present evil world," whatever might prove true with respect to another, it is presumed they are safe; but if that Saviour whom you have despised should indeed be the Son of God—if that name which you have blasphemed should be the only one given under heaven among men, by which you can be saved, what a situation must you be in! You may wish at present not to be told of him;

yea, even in death it may be a vexation, as it was to *Voltaire,* to hear of him; but hear of him you must, and, what is more, you must appear before him.

I cannot conclude this address without expressing my earnest desire for your salvation; and whether you will hear, or whether you will forbear, reminding you that your Redeemer is merciful. He can have compassion on the ignorant, and them who are out of the way. The door of mercy is not yet shut. At present you are invited, and even entreated to enter in. And every thing which, as a sinner, you can want, is graciously provided in the Gospel: a free pardon through the atonement of Jesus; a full justification through his righteousness; and the promised aids of his Holy Spirit to purify your heart and reform your life. Now, therefore, is the accepted time; this is the day of salvation. But if you still continue hardened against Him, you may find, to your cost, that the abuse of mercy gives an edge to justice; and that, to be crushed to atoms by falling rocks, or buried in oblivion at the bottom of mountains, were rather to be chosen than an exposure to the *wrath of the Lamb.*

TESTIMONY OF THE INFIDEL ROUSSEAU.

"I will confess to you that the majesty of the Scriptures strikes me with admiration, as the purity of the Gospel hath its influence on my heart. Peruse the works of our philosophers with all their pomp of diction: how mean, how contemptible are they, compared with the Scripture. Is it possible that a book, at once so simple and sublime, should be merely the work of man? Is it possible that the sacred personage whose history it contains, should be himself a mere man? Do we find that he assumed the tone of an enthusiast or ambitious sectary? What sweetness, what purity in his manner; what an affecting gracefulness in his delivery; what sublimity in his maxims; what

profound wisdom in his discourses; what presence of mind, what subtlety, what truth in his replies; how great the command over his passions! Where is the man, where the philosopher, who could so live, and so die, without weakness, and without ostentation?

"The death of Socrates, peaceably philosophizing with his friends, appears the most agreeable that could be wished for: that of Jesus, expiring in the midst of agonizing pains, abused, insulted, and accused by a whole nation, is the most horrible that could be feared. Socrates, in receiving the poison, blessed indeed the weeping executioner who administered it; but Jesus, in the midst of excruciating tortures, prayed for his merciless tormentors. Yes, if the life and death of Socrates were those of a sage, the life and death of Jesus are those of a God. Shall we suppose the evangelic history a mere fiction? Indeed, my friend, it bears not the marks of fiction; on the contrary, the history of Socrates, which nobody presumes to doubt, is not so well attested as that of Jesus Christ. Such a supposition, in fact, only shifts the difficulty, without obviating it: it is more inconceivable that a number of persons should agree to write such a history, than that only one should furnish the history of it. The Jewish authors were incapable of the diction, and strangers to the morality contained in the Gospel, the marks of whose truth are so striking and inimitable, that the *inventor* would be a more astonishing character than the *hero*." Emile, Book 4, Works, vol. 9, pp. 147–151, Geneva.

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No. 259.

A VIEW

OF THE

EVIDENCES OF CHRISTIANITY.

BY J. FLETCHER.

1. The sacred penmen, the prophets and the apostles, were holy, excellent men, and *would* not—artless, illiterate men, and therefore *could* not, lay the horrible scheme of deluding mankind. The hope of gain did not influence them, for they were self-denying men, that left all to follow a Master who *had not where to lay his head*, and whose grand initiating maxim was, *Except a man forsake all that he hath, he cannot be my disciple.* They were so disinterested that they secured nothing on earth but hunger and nakedness, stocks and prisons, racks and tortures, which indeed was all that they could or did expect, in consequence of Christ's express declarations. Add to this, that they were so many, and lived at such distance of time and place from each other, that, had they been impostors, it would have been impracticable for them to contrive and carry on a forgery without being detected. And as they neither would nor could *deceive* the world, so they neither could nor would *be deceived* themselves; for they were, days, months, and years, *eye* and *ear* witnesses of the things which they relate; and, to leave us no room to question their sincerity, most of them joyfully sealed the truth of their doctrines with their own blood.

2. But even while they lived, they confirmed their testimony by a variety of miracles, wrought in divers places, and for a number of years; sometimes before thousands of their enemies, as the miracles of Christ and his disciples; sometimes before hundreds of thousands, as those of Moses. These miracles were so well known and attested, that when both Christ and Moses appealed to their authenticity before their bitterest opposers, mentioning the persons upon whom, as well as the particular time when, and the places

where they had been performed, the facts were never denied, but were passed over in silence, or maliciously attributed to the prince of the devils. So sure, then, as God would never have displayed his arm in the most astonishing manner for the support of imposture, the sacred penmen had their commission from the Almighty, and their writings are his *lively oracles.*

3. Reason itself dictates, that nothing but the plainest *matter of fact* could induce so many thousands of prejudiced and persecuting Jews to embrace the humbling, self-denying doctrines of the cross, which they so much despised and abhorred. Nothing but the clearest evidence, arising from undoubted truth, could make multitudes of lawless, luxurious heathens receive, follow, and transmit to posterity the doctrines and writings of the apostles; especially, at a time when the vanity of their pretensions to miracles and the gift of tongues could be so easily discovered, had they been impostors, and at a time when the profession of Christianity exposed persons of all ranks to the greatest contempt and most imminent danger. In this respect, the case of the primitive Christians widely differed from that of Mahomet's followers; for those who adhered to the warlike, violent impostor, saved their lives and property, or attained to honor, by their new, easy, and flesh-pleasing religion; but those who devoted themselves to the meek, self-denying, crucified Jesus, were frequently spoiled of their goods, and cruelly put to death; or, if they escaped with their lives, were looked upon as the very dregs of mankind.

4. When the authenticity of the miracles was attested by thousands of living witnesses, religious rites were instituted and performed by hundreds of thousands, agreeable to Scripture injunctions, in order to perpetuate that authenticity. And these solemn ceremonies have ever since been kept up in all parts of the world: the *passover* by the Jews, in remembrance of Moses' miracles in Egypt; and the *eucharist* by Christians, as a memorial of Christ's death.

5. The Scriptures have not only the external sanction of miracles, but the internal stamp of the omniscient God, by a variety of prophecies, some of which have already been most exactly confirmed by the events predicted: witness the rise and fall of the four grand monarchies, according to Daniel's prophecy, chapters 2 and 7, and the destruction

of the city and temple of Jerusalem, foretold by Christ, Matt. 24 : 2 ; while others are every day fulfilled in the face of infidels, particularly the persecution of the real disciples of Christ in our times, as well as in all ages—see Matt. 10 : 22, 35 ; John 15 : 20 ; and Gal. 4 : 29—and the present miserable state of the Jews, so exactly described by Moses about three thousand years ago. See Deut. 28 : 65.

6. This scattered, despised people, the irreconcilable enemies of Christians, keep with amazing care the Old Testament, full of the prophetic history of Jesus Christ, and by that means afford the world a striking proof that the New Testament is true ; and Christians in their turn show that the Old Testament is abundantly confirmed and explained by the New. The Earl of Rochester, the great wit of the last century, was so struck with this proof, that upon reading the fifty-third chapter of Isaiah, with floods of penitential tears he lamented his former infidelity, and warmly embraced the faith which he had so publicly ridiculed.

7. To say nothing of the venerable antiquity, and wonderful preservation of those books, some of which are by far the most ancient in the world, but to pass over the inimitable simplicity, or true sublimity of their style, they carry with them such characters of truth as command the respect of every unprejudiced reader. They open to us the mystery of the creation, the nature of God, angels, and man, the immortality of the soul, the end for which we were made, the origin and connection of moral and natural evil, the vanity of this world, and the glory of the next. There we see inspired shepherds, tradesmen, and fishermen, surpassing as much the greatest philosophers as these did the mass of mankind, both in meekness of wisdom and sublimity of doctrine. There we admire the purest morality in the world, agreeable to the dictates of sound reason, confirmed by the witness which God has placed for himself in our breasts, and exemplified in the lives of men of like passions with ourselves. There we discover a vein of ecclesiastical history and theological truth, consistently running through a collection of sixty-six different books, written by various authors, in different languages, during the space of above fifteen hundred years. There we find, as in a deep and pure spring, all the genuine drops and streams of spiritual

knowledge which can be met with in the largest libraries. There the workings of the human heart are described in a manner that demonstrates the inspiration of the Searcher of hearts. There we have a particular account of all our spiritual maladies, with their various symptoms, and the method of a certain cure—a cure that has been witnessed by millions of martyrs and departed saints, and is now enjoyed by thousands of good men, who would account it an honor to seal the truth of the Scriptures with their own blood. There you meet with the noblest strains of penitential and joyous devotion, adapted to the dispositions and states of all travellers to Sion. And there you read those awful threatenings and cheering promises, which are daily fulfilled in the consciences of men, to the admiration of believers and the astonishment of attentive infidels.

8. The wonderful efficacy of the Scriptures is another proof that they are of God. When they are faithfully expounded by his ministers, and powerfully applied by his Spirit, they *wound and heal*, they *kill and make alive*, they alarm the careless, turn or enrage the wicked, direct the lost, support the tempted, strengthen the weak, comfort mourners, and nourish pious souls. As the woman of Samaria said of Jesus, *Come, see a man that told me all that ever I did: is not this the Christ?* a good man can say of the Bible, Come, see a book that told me all that was in my heart, and acquainted me with the various trials and dangers I have met with in my spiritual travels—a book where I have found those truths which, like a divinely-tempered sword, have cut my way through all the snares and forces of my spiritual adversaries; and by whose directions my soul has happily entered the paradise of divine and brotherly love. Is not this the book of God?

9. To conclude, it is exceedingly remarkable, that the more humble and holy people are, the more they read, admire, and value the Scriptures; and on the contrary, the more self-conceited, worldly-minded, and wicked, the more they neglect, despise, and asperse them.

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FOR EVER!

FROM REV. RICHARD BAXTER.

Alas, what heart can conceive, or what tongue express, the pains of those souls that are now enduring the wrath of God! If thou couldst ask the thousands in hell what madness brought them thither, many of them would answer, "We thought we were Christians, and sure of being saved, till we found ourselves here. We have flattered ourselves into these torments, and now there is no remedy."

Reader, I must in faithfulness tell thee, that these false hopes of being saved while thou art living in sin, will prove in the end but a ruinous delusion. There is none of this believing in hell. In this life, though sinners are threatened with the wrath of God, yet their hope of escaping bears up their hearts. We can now scarcely speak with the vilest drunkard, or swearer, or scoffer, but he hopes to be saved, notwithstanding all his sins.

It is the most pitiable sight this world affords, to see such an ungodly person *dying*, and to think of his soul and his hopes departing together. With what a sad change he appears in another world! Think, then, how it will aggravate the misery of lost souls, that, with the loss of heaven, they shall lose all that hope of it which now supports them. Besides, they will lose also that false peace of conscience, which makes their present life so easy. Who would think, when we see how quietly the multitude of the ungodly live, that they must very shortly lie down in everlasting flames? They are as free from fears as an obedient believer, and perhaps often have less uneasiness of mind. In this life, when they were told of hell, or when conscience troubled their peace, they had comforters at hand: their jovial friends, their business, their company, their mirth. They could drink, play, or sleep away their sorrows. There is none of this in hell: there all these remedies will vanish. They will there lose all their carnal mirth and jovial companions. To meditate and pray now, they fancy would be enough to make them miserable, or run mad. They were wont to

think sermons and prayers long. Oh, how will they regret that they thought so, when their doom is fixed *for ever*. Poor souls, what a misery will that life be where they shall have nothing but sorrow—intense, heart-piercing, multiplied sorrow. Is there one merry heart in hell, or one joyful countenance, or jesting tongue? How will it even cut them to the heart to look each other in the face. What an interview will there be, when they shall be heard cursing the day that ever they saw one another.

But the torments of lost souls must be extreme, because they are the effect of *divine vengeance*. God, being infinitely just as well as abundant in mercy, has himself appointed them for those who reject Christ. As it was no less than God whom they offended, so it is no less than God who will punish them for their offences. If it were but a creature with whom they had to do, they might bear it better; but "it is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God." Heb. 10 : 31.

Consider also, that the *body and soul will suffer together*. The body must bear its part, but the soul being of a more excellent nature than the body, its torments will far exceed those of the body. That body which was so carefully attended to, so tenderly cherished, so curiously dressed, what must it then endure! Those ears which were accustomed to music and songs, shall hear the shrieks and cries of their wretched companions: children crying out against their parents, who gave them encouragement and example in evil; husbands and wives, masters and servants, ministers and people, magistrates and subjects, charging their misery one upon another, for discouragement in duty, for conniving at sin, and being silent when they should have plainly foretold the danger. Thus will soul and body be companions in woe!

But the greatest aggravation of these torments will be their *eternity*. When a thousand millions of ages are past, they are as fresh to begin over again as the first day. If there were any hope of an end, it would ease lost souls to foresee it; but *for ever* is an intolerable thought. They were never weary of sinning, nor will God ever be weary of punishing; they never heartily repented of sin, so God will never repent of his judgments. They broke the laws of the eternal God, and therefore shall suffer eternal misery.

Why does the approach of death so much alarm thee? Why does the thought or mention of hell occasion thee so much uneasiness? If the bare idea be grievous, what must it be to endure the torments themselves for ever? Is it not an intolerable thing to burn part of thy body by holding it in the fire? What then will it be to suffer ten thousand times more for ever in the pit of misery, where thou shalt have no other company than devils and condemned spirits, and shalt not only see them, but be tormented with them, and by them, night and day, for ever?

Reader, thou art to this day in earnest about the things of this life. If thou art sick, or in pain, what serious complaints dost thou make! If thou art poor, how hard dost thou labor for a livelihood! And is not the business of thy salvation of far greater moment? If one of thine acquaintance should come from the dead, and tell thee that he suffered the torments of hell for those sins of which thou art guilty, what a different person wouldst thou afterwards be! If thou hadst seen the judgment-seat, and the books opened, and the wicked trembling on the left hand of the Judge, and the godly rejoicing on the right hand, and their different sentences pronounced, what a different life wouldst thou afterwards lead! This sight thou shalt one day surely see. If thou hadst seen hell opened, and all its inhabitants in their ceaseless torments, and heaven opened, as Stephen did, Acts 7 : 56, and all the saints there triumphing in glory, what a holy life wouldst thou have led after such sights! These thou wilt see before long. If thou hadst endured one year, or one day, or one hour, the torments thou now hearest of, how seriously wouldst thou then speak of hell, and pray against it! If thou knewest this were the last day thou hadst to live, how wouldst thou spend it?

Now, reader, let me solemnly ask thee—What sayest thou to all this? Thou art standing this day on the brink of eternity. Wilt thou continue in thy sins, and be lost for ever? Remember, God is in earnest with thee now, and will be hereafter. What, shall heaven be utterly lost to thee? Shall the gates of hell be closed upon thee for ever? Trifle no longer. Remember, death is at hand, judgment comes next, and after that an eternity of happiness or misery! If thou diest impenitent, unpardoned, and unsanctified, hell is thy portion FOR EVER! FOR EVER! FOR EVER.

Dost thou then inquire, "How can I escape the wrath to come? What must I do to be saved?" Acts 16 : 30. Let me tell thee, in reply, If thou art really sincere, and in earnest, and dost feel thyself a lost sinner, guilty and condemned before God, and if thou dost really desire to be saved, then hearken unto the only way of salvation. "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved," Acts 16 : 31; "for God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life." John 3 : 16. He died in the place of sinners, as their substitute; so that God can now be just, and the justifier of him that believeth in Jesus. Rom. 3 : 26. Repent, therefore, and forsake thy sins. Flee unto Jesus Christ for pardon; for he says, "Him that cometh unto me, I will in no wise cast out." John 6 : 37. Delay not one moment, lest God's anger consume thee, and tear thee in pieces, and there be none to deliver thee. Psalm 50 : 22. While the door of mercy is open hasten unto Christ, and he will receive thee. Retire to thy room, fall down on thy knees, and when none but God can see thee, cry mightily unto the Lord for mercy. Plead the merits of Christ; pray fervently from the bottom of thy heart, that he would give thee his Holy Spirit, and create in thee desires after God and holiness, and so prepare thee for heaven, and save thy soul for ever. Remember, the blood of Christ can alone cleanse thee from all sin. 1 John, 1 : 7. He alone can save thee from the dreadful wrath of God; for he came into the world to save sinners. 1 Tim. 1 : 15.

Trembling sinner, thou needest not despair. Come to Christ and be saved. Remember, life is uncertain. Health is uncertain. Now, while thou hast both, set about thy salvation in earnest. Christ will pardon thee, and will give thee true peace of mind in this life, and when thou diest, thou shalt dwell with him in heaven, in perfect happiness, throughout the countless ages of eternity. Amen.

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THE TAPROOT.

On a bright and bracing afternoon, early in March, returning from a visit to an afflicted family, I met with one of my intelligent parishioners sitting on a fence. A gorgeous sunset was displaying its glories in the west, and my friend gave true indications that the day closing around us had not been spent in idleness. "What," said I, in a friendly tone of recognition, "are you doing here?" "I want," said he, "to transplant that pretty elm into my door-yard, and I have been laboring here for hours to dig it up, in vain. The tree, perhaps, is a little too old to be transplanted; but if removed early in the spring, and with a large root, trees frequently live, even beyond the age of this."

I crossed the fence to take a view of the tree. I found it surrounded with a deep trench, and its lateral roots all cut; and feeling that a strong push would lay it on the earth, I gave it one. Not a twig nor a leaf moved the more on that account. I wondered—and turning to my friend, I asked, "Why is it so firm, when so many of its roots are cut, and when united to the earth by a stem so small?" "The *taproot*," said he, "remains, and until that is cut it will stand firm." Hearing the phrase for the first time in my life, I asked, "What do you mean by the *taproot?*" "Almost every tree," said he, "has its taproot, which goes as straight down into the earth as the trunk goes into the air; and until that root is cut the tree stands, and will grow. And if I should fill up this trench now, the tree would feel but little the cutting of all these lateral roots. They would soon grow out, and the tree would be as strong as ever."

We soon parted. I pursued my way home pondering these remarks. The tree was transplanted, and now stands, a noble and beautiful tree, just in the place selected for it. My friend has been transplanted to another world. Years have passed since the above conversation, but it has never been forgotten. It has suggested many truths to my mind; and it explains many things frequently occurring under our

own observation, and which frequently cause doubt and hesitation. Ponder some of these.

Are trees transplanted with difficulty after they have received a certain growth? This all admit. The rule is, to transplant them, whether fruit, forest, or ornamental, when young. Such is the law which rules in the kingdom of grace. "How can a man be born when he is old?" is a question of emphatic import to those who have grown up to mature years without repentance.

Has almost every tree its *taproot?* So every sinner has his besetting sin, which sustains him in his rebellion against God more than any other, and even when almost all others seem to be laid aside.

Are the lateral roots cut in vain, until the taproot is cut? Does the tree stand until the taproot is severed? So, as far as their salvation is concerned, men are reformed in vain from immoral practices, until the heart is converted. A depraved heart is the taproot of that tree of evil which bears fruit unto death. And until that heart is taken away, the tree stands.

Is the tree sustained by one root when all others are cut? Through that one root is it nourished into a permanent, if not a luxurious growth? So one sin unmortified, with its power over the soul unbroken, secures its final, its eternal loss.

How manifold are the illustrations of these truths in the Bible! Why did Balaam, who understood the will of God, and saw the visions of the Almighty, do as he did? Why did Judas, after having preached the Gospel, and wrought miracles, and been numbered with the apostles, betray his Master? Why did Ananias and Sapphira, and Simon Magus, do as they did? Why did the young man, who asked of Jesus what he should do to inherit eternal life, and whom Jesus loved, do as he did? In all these cases *covetousness* was the taproot sin; and that was uncut. O covetousness—often miscalled prudence and economy, but, by God, idolatry—how many souls hast thou destroyed, and art thou destroying!

But I have said that the above conversation with my friend at the tree also explains many things frequently occurring, and which induce doubt and hesitation.

Under the ministry of a faithful pastor sat an amiable

man, with unfailing regularity, for years. All hoped he was a Christian. At each returning communion season it was expected that he would profess his faith in Christ; but he came not. None were more tender than he seemed; and his pastor supposed that he was kept from the communion of the saints only by that diffidence and distrust which are often the accompaniments of true piety. A truer explanation came at last. He loved *strong drink*, but took it only at night. The appetite grew until it vanquished shame, and he became a daily and open drunkard. He forsook the house and the ordinances of God. During the absence of his family at church on a certain Sabbath, he drank beyond measure—he fell into the fire—and when his family returned he was dead, and a portion of his body burned to a cinder! Why did not this man, in the days of his tears and tenderness, take Christ for his portion? The taproot was not cut.

I knew a young man, who, although the child of praying parents, grew up an alien and outcast from the commonwealth of Israel. Grace is not hereditary; it is the gift of God. In a spiritual refreshing, he was deeply convicted—he hoped he was converted. He sought admission to the church; but fearing that all was not right, he was kindly requested to wait until the next communion season. In a few weeks afterwards he sat at a gaming-table until the stars were quenched in the light of the rising sun. And he continued until his death tenfold more the child of hell than he was before. The taproot was not cut.

And the prevalence of some one sin—its reigning power over the soul—is the reason why every sinner that hears the Gospel does not believe it; or, that believes the Gospel, does not at once, by repentance towards God and faith in our Lord Jesus Christ, seek the salvation of his soul. And the remaining influence of a sin whose power has been broken, is the reason why any Christian fails in consecrating himself a living sacrifice to God.

Reader, are you a sinner convinced of the truth of the Gospel, without repentance, without faith in Christ? If so, how important to know the sin that holds you back from the work of your salvation. There is some one sin that does this more than any other; perhaps, more than all others. What is it?

What are the objects that most delight you? What are the gratifications on which you bestow most time? Thoughts as to what, most intrude themselves when alone? The last thing which the sailor throws overboard, in his efforts to save his sinking vessel, is that which he deems most precious: what is the sin you are most anxious to retain? When you think of being a Christian, what is the sin, the pursuit, the habit, that you feel in prospect would give you the most pain to abandon? These questions point to your besetting sin—your taproot sin. Unless cut, you are lost.

But if old trees cannot be transplanted, may not old sinners be converted? Yes, they may. As to aged sinners, the difficulty lies in the nature of man, and of sin, and of evil habits, and not in the grace of God. Grace is all-conquering when God sees fit to apply it. Reader, are you an aged sinner? I have seen the man, fourscore and two years old, who bled in the battles of the Revolution, who learned its worst vices and continued in their practice until the age stated, hopefully converted. I have seen him brought, trembling with palsy, in his arm-chair to God's house, and there joining himself to the people of God; and having commemorated the love of Christ, lifting up his withered hands to heaven in thanksgiving for the mercies vouchsafed. And his subsequent life and triumphant death testified that the work was of God. But in my experience this stands out a solitary case, to check presumption on the one hand, and despair on the other. Take then these thoughts for meditation:

1. You have a besetting sin, stronger in its bad influence over you than any other.

2. It is of the highest importance to you to know what it is. Resolve to know it.

3. Reformation is not conversion. The tree stands when all its lateral roots are cut.

4. Unless by the grace of God your heart is changed, all is vain. The tree of evil, whose fruit is death, remains, because the taproot is not cut.

5. However aged, or wicked, there is grace and power to meet your case. Seek them without delay, and aright, and they are yours.

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No. 262.

TO THOSE

COMMENCING A RELIGIOUS LIFE.

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1. Remember that the commencement of the Christian life is like the "dawning light, which increaseth more and more to the perfect day." Therefore, when the hope of peace and pardon dawns in the heart, do not consider the great business of life as *accomplished*, but only as *begun*.

2. Do not expect so sudden and remarkable a change as to leave *no doubt* of its reality. Did religion enter the soul in perfection, and to the entire exclusion of sin, the change would be so marked and obvious as to leave no room for doubt. But usually, there is in the Christian heart a perpetual struggle between good and evil, and thus a continual competition of evidence for and against, according as the good or evil prevails.

3. Evidence of piety is not so much to be sought in *high emotions* of any kind, as in real humility, self-distrust, hungering and thirsting after righteousness, sorrow for sin, and a continual effort, in every-day life, to regulate our thoughts, feelings, and conduct, by the word of God. It is the nature, and not the degree of our affections which is to be regarded in the examination of our evidences. Some persons are so constituted that they are not susceptible of very strong emotions, and ought not to expect them, in reference to religion, any more than other subjects that interest the mind. The best way to know our feelings is to see how they influence the conduct. "By their fruits ye shall know them."

4. Do not expect to find, in your own case, every thing you have heard or read of in the *experience of others*. For it may be that many things we hear and read of are not correct feelings, and do not afford just grounds of confidence to any one; and if they are *correct* experience, it may be the experience of a *mature* Christian, and not to be expected in the beginning of a religious life. It must be remembered that as no two countenances are formed alike, so no two

hearts are fashioned alike, or placed in exactly the same circumstances; and it would be as vain to seek all the varieties of Christian experience in one person, as to seek all varieties of human features in one face.

5. Do not expect that the evidence desired will all come immediately, and at once. It must come *progressively*, as the result of continued obedience to the will of God.

6. Do not suppose that religion is a principle of such self-preserving energy, that when once implanted in the soul it will continue to thrive and increase without effort. God will not sustain and bring to maturity the work of grace, without your own voluntary concurrence in the diligent use of means, more than he will cause the harvest to whiten in the field of the sluggard. Indulge, therefore, no such ideas of inability and dependence on God, as shall impair a full sense of perfect obligation to do whatever can be done in working out your own salvation. God assists those who make efforts to aid and advance themselves.

7. Entertain no such ideas of the sovereignty of God in the bestowment of his grace, as would awaken any doubt of his affording needful aid where he sees sincere endeavors to grow in grace. If some Christians are more eminent than others, it is, perhaps, always through the blessing of God on their more devoted efforts. It pleases him to crown with success the hand of the diligent instead of the hand of the slothful, not only in temporal, but in spiritual things. This thought cannot be too strongly impressed upon the minds of those who are just commencing the Christian life. To them peculiarly, are such promises as these directed: "Ask, and ye shall receive; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you. Every one that asketh, receiveth," etc.

Do not be afraid of indulging in feelings which may seem to be right, from the fear of deception. On the contrary, cherish such feelings, and try to recall them often. Go forward in the strength of God, and *do your duty*, and he will save you from deception while thus employed.

8. Do not expect to be made happy by religion, unless you become eminent Christians. A half-way Christian can neither enjoy the pleasures of the world nor the pleasures of religion; for his conscience will not let him seek the one, and he is too indolent to obtain the other. The Christian

may be the happiest man on earth, but he must be a faithful, active, and devoted Christian. None are disappointed in finding religion a source of unfailing peace and joy, but those who refuse to drink deep from the wells of salvation; unless we except those who, from some derangement of the nervous system, or failure of health, do not enjoy the clear and undisturbed exercise of their faculties.

9. Do not make the practice and example of *other* Christians the *standard of piety* at which you aim. By this means, a more disastrous influence has been exerted on the church and on the world, than perhaps by all other causes that could be named. Generally, when persons commence the Christian life, their consciences are susceptible and tender. They are strict and watchful in the performance of duty, and are pained even by a slight neglect. They have been wont to feel that becoming religious implies a great change; that "old things must pass away, and all things become new." But when they look among their Christian friends, and turn to them for aid, as those who have had experience and have made advances in the Christian life, they find that they seem to look upon duties and deficiencies in a very different manner. They seem to neglect many things which the young Christian has felt to be very important; and to practise many things which he had supposed inconsistent with religion. Then commences the disastrous effect. The young Christian begins to feel that he need not be more particular than those to whom he has ever looked up with deference and respect. He begins to imagine that he has been rather too strict and particular. He begins to take a retrograde course, and though his conscience and the Bible often check and reprove, yet after a few ineffectual struggles, he lowers his standard and walks as others do.

Look into your Bible and see how Christians ought to live. See how the Bible says those who are Christians must live, and then if you find your Christian friends living in a different way, instead of having cause for feeling that you may do so too, you have only cause to fear that they are deceiving themselves with the belief that they are Christians when they are not. Remember, that the farther your Christian friends depart from the standard of Christian character laid down in the Bible, the less reason have you to

hope that they are Christians. And do not hesitate on this subject because you find many professed Christians who are indifferent and lax in their practice and example. Remember that Christ has said, "Many shall say unto me in that day, Lord, Lord," thus claiming to be his disciples, to whom he will say, "I never knew you." Do not let professed Christians tempt you to fall into the society of such unhappy castaways.

10. Do not be *periodical* Christians. There are some who profess religion, who never seem to feel any interest on the subject except when every one else does. It is true, there are special seasons of revived religion in the hearts of all Christians; but if it is only at such times that progress is made in the divine life, and interest is manifested in the salvation of souls, there is great reason to fear that what is called religion, is nothing but sympathy with the feelings of others.

11. Be sure that there exists a *marked difference* between your appearance and conduct, and that of those who are not Christians. Remember, that Christ has required this of you, and that even *the world* expect it. Do not suppose you can recommend religion by appearing interested in every thing that interests those who have no better portion than this world. Remember that your deportment, your conversation, your interest in dress, in company, in amusements, the manner in which you perform your religious duties, are all carefully noted and weighed by those around you who do not love religion; and if they do not see a marked difference between you and themselves, they either conclude that there is nothing in religion, or else that you are a hypocrite. The people of the world expect that you will be very different from them, and despise you in their hearts if you are not. If you wish to recommend religion, let the world see it acted out according to the beautiful pattern laid down in the Bible, and do not suppose that you can improve this pattern by any addition or subtraction of your own.

On one subject there are some who need instruction. There is a class of Christians who appear taciturn, unsocial, and even sad. This appearance is altogether inconsistent with the spirit of religion. Christians ought to appear cheerful and happy; to appear to receive with pleasure and

gratitude all the lawful enjoyments bestowed by their heavenly Father. Such a gloomy deportment as has been described does not do honor to religion, and causes those whom we wish to win to the ways of pleasantness and peace, to feel that religion is a melancholy, unsocial, and forbidding subject. All professors of religion should endeavor to have such views of God, his love, his providence, his care, and should so live, as to be cheerful and happy, and to appear so.

On the contrary, there is a class of professed Christians who indulge in frequent trifling and levity. This is quite as inconsistent and injurious as the former, and if any thing it is more so. Let the Christian, at least, learn to make a distinction between cheerfulness and levity. Remember, we are commanded to avoid "foolish talking and jesting," and that it is possible to be happy, cheerful, affable, and kind, without any trifling or levity.

12. Remember, that your evidence of possessing religion ceases when any thing else has the first place in your thoughts and interests. Religion should not lessen our love for our friends, or our enjoyment of rational pleasures; but the desire to please God, in all our ways, should be the prevailing feeling of the mind. Our Saviour says, we cannot have two masters; God and his service must be first in our thoughts and affections, or else the world and its pleasures are first. If, then, we would find whose servants we are, we must find who has the first place in our thoughts and affections.

13. Never for one day omit to read the Bible, with prayer. This is a most important direction. It is of the utmost importance that you should never, for once, break through this habit. Prayer and the Bible are your anchor and your shield; they will hold you firmly in the path of duty, and protect you from temptation. You had better give up one meal every day, if it is necessary, in order to secure time for this duty. You had better give up any thing else. Nothing is a duty, if the performance of it will interfere with this duty. Remember, that the Bible, under the teaching of the Spirit, is the bread of your life, and the water of your salvation; and that you cannot live in health a single day without their strengthening and invigorating influence.

14. Be regulated by a principle of duty in *little things.*

This is the way that common Christians are to cause their light to shine. Few Christians can expect to do any *great* things to show their love for the Saviour, but all can "deny themselves," and thus daily "take the cross and follow him." Religion should govern the temper and the tongue; should keep us from indolence, from vanity, from pride, from foolishness, from levity, from moroseness, from selfishness, and all the little every-day foibles to which we are exposed. Religion should exemplify its gentleness, in your kind and affable manners; its purity and propriety, in your conversation; its benevolence, in your conduct; and its consistency and heavenly tendency, in all your ways.

It is a most excellent method to go to some sincere and candid friend, and inquire what are your own defects in temper, character, and every-day deportment: and when you have discovered these, make it the object of your prayers and efforts to correct them.

One thing ought to be strictly regulated by principle, and that is the *employment of time.* Always feel that you are doing wrong when your time is passing unprofitably. Have some regularity and method on this subject. Endeavor to ascertain how much time should be devoted to your friends and to relaxation, and to let the remainder be all of it employed in the most useful manner you can devise. Never be satisfied with the manner in which you are spending your time, if you can think of any possible way in which it might be more usefully employed. Remember, that time is the precious talent for which you must account to God; and if you find yourself indulging in listless inactivity, or tempted to engage in employments of no practical use, remember your account to God. Be in a habit of inquiring, when you commence any employment, "Is there any thing I can do more useful than this?" And do not be satisfied till you have settled the question, that you are doing all the good you can.

15. Attempt, by your efforts and example, to *raise the standard of piety and activity.* If all who are now commencing the Christian life should make this an object, and not fall into the temptation which professed Christians so often set before the lambs of the flock, the church would indeed soon rise before the world, "fair as the moon, clear as the sun, and terrible as an army with banners."

Resolve to be an example to those who ought to be an example to you, and take the Bible, and the Bible only, for your guide in forming the Christian character.

Be active in promoting all benevolent objects. Make it an object to prepare to lead with propriety, when necessary, in all social devotional duties. At this period, when prayer and effort must unite in hastening the great day of the Lord, let every Christian learn to guide the devotions of others, as well as to lift up his own private supplications. There is nothing which so much promotes the "brotherly love" required in the Bible, and nothing which so much promotes union of effort and interest, as social prayer; and every one who commences a religious life, should aim to be prepared to perform such duties with propriety, and should stimulate others to engage in them.

16. Do not hesitate in the performance of all the *external* duties of a Christian, because you do not find satisfactory evidence that your *feelings* are right. Religious duty consists of two parts, feeling and action; and because we find great deficiency in one respect, we surely ought not to neglect the whole. It is as unreasonable as it would be not to attempt to feel right till every external duty was perfectly performed. If we are dissatisfied with our evidence, let us go on and do every thing that a Christian should do, as the most hopeful way to gain right feelings. We surely cannot hope to bring our hearts right by neglecting our outward duties.

17. Remember, that the principal duty of a Christian, as it respects others, is to excite them to the *immediate performance* of their religious duty. Jesus Christ has instituted his church in the world, that through its instrumentality the perishing may be saved. There is no Christian but can find some one mind, at least, over which he can have some influence; and if we can do any thing to save others from eternal death, nothing should for a moment prevent our attempting it. We should persuade our friend immediately to give a serious and earnest attention to the subject, to search the Scriptures, with prayer for divine illumination, and to give the affections and the heart to God.

Lastly, do not be discouraged because you find that you are *very deficient in every one of the particulars specified.* Remember, that the Christian life is a *warfare,* and that it

is only at the *end* that we are to come off conquerors, and more than conquerors. Remember, that He whom you are striving to serve and please is not a hard master. Though you have been inexcusable in the commission of any sin, and all the difficulties you find are of your own making, yet he can be "touched with the feeling of your infirmities." When He sees that you really are afflicted because you so constantly abuse and forget him, he pities you "as a father pitieth his children;" and so long as you use the means he has appointed to keep you from sin, and wait upon him for strength and guidance, he will never leave nor forsake you. When you feel your own strength and resolution failing, go to him who hath said, "My grace is sufficient for thee, and my strength shall be made perfect in weakness." Call upon him, "and he will be very gracious unto the voice of thy cry: when he shall hear it, he will answer thee. And thine ears shall hear a word behind thee, saying, This is the way, walk ye therein, when ye turn to the right, and when ye turn to the left." Remember, also, that the conflict is short; the race will speedily be accomplished. Soon your deficiencies and guilt shall pain you no more; soon you shall "see him as he is," and "awake in his likeness to be satisfied therewith."

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INDECISION IN RELIGION.

"*How long halt ye between two opinions?*" said the prophet Elijah "unto all the people"—"if the Lord be God, follow him; but if Baal, then follow him," 1 Kings, 18 : 21; and thus God now addresses all who are undecided in his service. In calling attention to this divine appeal, I shall take it for granted, that the reader receives the Scriptures as the rule of faith and practice; that he recognizes the great truths they reveal of man's ruin by sin, and salvation only through faith in a divine Redeemer and by the renewing of the Holy Ghost; and that he acknowledges the duty of putting his trust in Christ: while yet, through indecision, the subject of his own salvation is neglected. I remark, then,

1. Such indecision is CRIMINAL. It is criminal, because the relations which we sustain to God and the Scriptures, which teach us our duty, alike demand immediate service.

We are under obligations which never rested on the highest archangel. He, like us, has received his all from God, and is bound to render it to him again. But he was never a rebel against his Maker; never exposed to everlastlasting woe. For his redemption God never sacrificed his only Son. To rescue him from perdition, the Lord of glory never left the bosom of the Father, veiled his deity in clay, submitted to all the sufferings a rebel world could heap upon him, and shed his blood upon the accursed tree. To secure to him the offers of this salvation, no band of apostles spent their lives in toil; no train of martyrs sealed their doctrines with their blood; no church has been preserved, with all its institutions, for eighteen hundred years, amidst the wiles of Satan, the flames of persecution, and the still

more destructive ravages of internal conflict. But for us worms of the dust, guilty and polluted, all this has been done; and it has been effected, too, by God our Creator, Jesus our Redeemer, and the Holy Spirit our Sanctifier. We are the beings towards whom all this benevolence has been manifested; to whom all this grace is offered. And does not this bring us into a relation to God which demands our constant, our eternal service? Surely, then, it requires the immediate performance of duty. And in perfect conformity to this conclusion are all the requisitions of the Bible.

In its injunctions it makes no provision for any delay. It anticipates no such delay. In its precepts it declares what *is*, not what *will be* duty. In its commands it is no less decisive. "My son, give me thine heart." "Remember *now* thy Creator, in the days of thy youth." "God *now* commandeth all men everywhere to repent." And the language of St. Paul is, "I beseech you, therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is your reasonable service."

Indecision in religion is further criminal, because the *Scriptures point out our duty with sufficient plainness.*

The sum of their instructions to us sinners is, that we repent, and believe on the Lord Jesus Christ. Every one knows what it is to be sorry, to avoid whatever has been the occasion of his sorrow, and to pursue, in future, a different course. Repentance consists in exercising genuine sorrow for sin, an absolute forsaking of all sin, and the exercise of love and obedience to God. And faith, which the Gospel requires, consists in an unwavering belief, or an implicit confidence in all the record God has given of his Son, accompanied with corresponding affections and actions, love and obedience. Are not these duties intelligible? Will any one say he has difficulty in understanding them? The Bible says to every individual, "These do, and thou shalt live."

But if the claims of God upon us, the manner in which

he has made known his will, and the actual knowledge we possess of our duty, are such as they have been represented; if God has not only created and supported us, but has given his Son to redeem us by his blood; if he has written our duty, as it were, with a sunbeam before our eyes, and we are constrained to acknowledge that we do understand it, is there no criminality in neglecting to comply with it? Does indecision upon this plain, this momentous subject, incur no guilt? What should we think of the child, whom the highest degree of parental kindness could not excite to the performance of a single duty, and who should pay no other regard to the injunctions and entreaties of the most affectionate parent, than the cold compliment, "They are proper, I may sometime attend to them?" Who would not pronounce him a monster of ingratitude and disobedience? And yet the obligations of a child to his earthly parent bear no more proportion to our obligations to God, than man, a worm of the dust, bears to the infinite Jehovah. Inasmuch, then, as all the motives which urge us to the discharge of Christian duties at all, urge us to their immediate performance, we see both the fact and the reason that indecision in the case is criminal.

2. Indecision in religion is DANGEROUS. It is dangerous from the *uncertainty of life*. Our salvation must be secured while life continues, or it is lost for ever. This life is short at the longest. Still, were we certain of living to advanced age, the danger of delay would not appear so great. But when we reflect on the proportion of our race who are swept away in middle age, in youth, and even in childhood; when we consider how suddenly disease may prostrate these frail bodies, to how many fatal accidents we are every moment exposed, and how often, in the midst of all their pursuits, God says to unheeding mortals, "This night thy soul shall be required of thee," who, that has not fled to the blessed Jesus, can indulge a thought of safety? Who, that is not determined to make religion his first, his constant business, dares presume to hope for heaven?

Again, indecision is dangerous on account of *its influence in hardening the heart.* All our active faculties are strengthened by exercise; but passive impressions always leave that part of the system on which they are made, enervated, and less liable to be again affected by the same cause. The soldier, whose blood almost freezes in his veins at the first explosion of the cannon, after the exchange of a few shots scarcely remembers that he is upon the field of death. The surgeon, whose visage whitened, and whose whole frame trembled at the sight of an ordinary wound, after a few years' practice can calmly amputate a limb, or trepan a writhing patient. Not less evident are the effects of this principle of our nature in steeling the heart against religious impressions. The child hears a few words respecting the infinite God, or a boundless eternity, and his eyes are suffused with tears. When he has arrived at the season of youth, and has often heard these subjects discussed, he is not so easily affected. Still, he is tender. Impressive sermons, or alarming providences, seize upon his heart, and tears yet steal from his eyes. But go with him to the period of middle age, and he is seldom seen to weep. Every thing that should arouse his attention to the concerns of eternity, has become so familiar that nothing makes any perceptible impression. He can stand unmoved, even before the exhibition of that scene which shook the earth to its centre, and clothed the heavens in sackcloth. Follow him to the confines of second childhood. This season, it might naturally be supposed, would be favorable to seriousness. It might be expected that the honors, the riches, and the pleasures of the world, would now lose their hold upon his heart, and that the near approach of eternity would cause its scenes to produce upon his mind the effect of realities. But what is the fact? It is believed that futurity dwells less upon his mind than at any former period. It is true, as his system grows feeble, a degree of tenderness returns. But, is he affected, it is in view of the past. Does he weep, it is at the recollection of youthful scenes, which, even *then,*

produced no lasting effects upon his mind, and are much less likely *now* to leave any salutary impression.

If this is the common course where divine grace does not interpose, what are the natural effects of *indecision* in the case? It not only leaves a person exposed to all this train of consequences, but that very state of mind itself has, perhaps, a more powerful tendency to harden the heart than any other state into which the mind can be thrown. When truth is forced upon the understanding, and obligation pressed upon the conscience, the man is deeply affected. He is on the point of resolving. Though to *obey* he has no heart, yet refuse compliance he dares not. But the moment the expedient of delaying the decision occurs to his mind, he has at once an opiate for every uneasiness; a shield always at hand, with which to resist every dart from the remonstrances of conscience, and every arrow from the quiver of divine truth.

How powerful, how fatal, then, is the influence of indecision in hardening the already depraved heart, and in lessening the probability that it will ever become the subject of renewing grace.

But once more, indecision in religion is dangerous, because it tends directly to *provoke God to remove from us his Holy Spirit.* God says, "My Spirit shall not always strive with man." The Scriptures speak of those who are left to hardness of heart and blindness of mind. If we believe the representations of the Bible with respect to the depravity of the heart, we must be assured that the moment the Holy Spirit is finally withdrawn from any one, his destruction is inevitable.

God has not only made provision for our salvation at infinite expense, and offered it without money and without price, but in compassion to our stupidity and obduracy, he grants us the influences of his Spirit, to enlighten our understandings, to awaken our consciences, and to affect our hearts. But if we treat with listless indifference that divine Agent, on whose operations our eternal all is suspended, what, in the

sight of God, must be the import of such conduct? Is it not saying, in the most decisive language, "Depart from us, for we desire not the knowledge of thy ways?" What can be more provoking to the infinite Jehovah? What more calculated to induce him to withdraw from us his Spirit, and leave us to our own hearts' desire? And should he do this, with regard to any of us, the consequences must be *indescribably dreadful.*

No matter how much instruction we might receive, it would only serve to pour light upon the understanding, against which we should be continually sinning. No matter how long we might live, it would only be to fill up the measure of our iniquities. No matter how much we might enjoy Christian society, and how near to heaven we might be exalted by our privileges; they would only serve to sink us lower in the pit of despair, and render the recollections of neglected mercy a thousandfold more insupportable. How highly, then, does it become us, with deep humility, with unfeigned penitence, with determined resolutions of obedience, to raise, with the Psalmist, the earnest supplication, "Lord, take not thy Holy Spirit from me."

I have thus considered the criminality and the danger of indecision in religion. Faint as the representation has been, the subject must appear important. Let it, my dear reader, have all the weight on your mind which its importance demands.

But perhaps the reader is conscious that he is one of those who remain yet undecided in the great concern of religion, and still "*halting* between two opinions." Allow me, then, to say to you, "*One thing* thou *lackest.*" And that is emphatically, *the one thing needful.* An object, in comparison with which, crowns are but toys—worlds are but bubbles.

Suffer me, therefore, to use the utmost plainness, while I attempt to prevail on you to abandon the dangerous ground on which you are resting, and to take a position more favor-

able to the attainment of your highest good. You are firmly convinced that religion is necessary, and that, to be happy, you must possess it sooner or later. With religious truth, too, you have become familiar. But it makes only a slight impression on your mind. You have therefore concluded that you must wait until God shall pass before you, in some remarkable event of his providence, or in some signal display of his grace: then you presume your attention will be excited; then you shall become a devoted Christian.

But suffer me to ask, my dear friend, on what basis is this presumption founded? If the thunders of Sinai, the mercies of Calvary, and the retributions of eternity have hitherto produced no effect upon your mind, what can you suppose will ever arouse you? Will Sinai again be clothed in terror? Must Calvary again be crimsoned with the blood of an expiring Saviour? Shall the Holy Ghost dictate a new revelation, to portray in livelier colors the indescribable destinies of the world to come? Or must the angel of death tear from your embrace the dearest object of your affections, and thus cause your eyes to weep, and your heart to bleed? Any of these scenes would be solemn. They would be awfully affecting. But with an undecided heart, like the Jews who beheld the crucifixion of their Lord, you might witness them without one holy affection, without one religious impression, and even with a tenfold degree of hardness.

The character of God, the relations we sustain to him, and the ceaseless mercies we receive from his hand, are motives ever before us, which should impel us to obedience. Bring them distinctly before your mind. Revolve them in the house, and by the way; when you lie down, and when you rise up. And should you find within your bosom a heart unmoved by all these claims, a heart that, in view of so much excellence, so much love, so much mercy, can feel no gratitude, render no obedience, consider, I beseech you, what must be the character of that heart, and treat it according to its desert.

Fear not to charge home upon it all the guilt which such astonishing insensibility incurs, and determine to allow it no peace till it shall yield unreserved obedience. And cease not day nor night to cry to the Father of your spirits, that he would take from you this heart of stone, and give you a new heart of flesh.

Contemplate also the wonders of the day in which you live. It is a day in which operations are rapidly advancing for the conversion of the world. Recollect the claims of God upon those who have enjoyed the Gospel, to communicate it to the multitude who are perishing for lack of vision. And can you remain inactive? Consider the glory that will redound to God, and the happiness which will accrue to men, from these efforts of Christian love. And can you rest satisfied without any part or lot in the work, or with what you can do without faith in Christ, or love to the souls of men? Think of the tide of mercy that is rolling through the earth, bearing thousands and millions on its waves to heaven. And can you sit at the very gates of the New Jerusalem, and not make one effort, not form one resolution, to participate in its bliss?

But I forbear. I cannot doubt that more than the half-formed resolution—I will not doubt that the full intention to become a Christian is already struggling in your breast. O let it be a present determination. Purposes of *future* amendment are of no avail. They are at best but delusion. Were crowns presented, deliberation would be safety. Were kingdoms proffered, hesitation would be prudence. But in the momentous concerns of *eternity*, experience has demonstrated that *delay* is *presumption*, that *procrastination* is *death*.

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GEORGE LOVELL.

AN AUTHENTIC NARRATIVE.

THERE are some passages in the life of an individual of my acquaintance so interesting and striking, that they ought not to be withheld from the public eye. They deserve the name of *confessions*, and I know no more suitable channel for their conveyance than the pages of a tract. GEORGE LOVELL—for by that name I will introduce to my readers the true history of the subject of this narrative—was the child of a pious mother and a moral father. His father was once inclined to Universalist or Unitarian sentiments, but the serene and steadfast example of his beloved wife, enforcing the Gospel truth which he heard every Sabbath from the pulpit, wrought, under God, an entire change in his speculative sentiments. At the birth of George, his mother, like Hannah, could say, '*For this child I prayed.*" He was not only consecrated

to God in fervent and believing prayer, but by a similar reach of faith to that which adorned the mother of Samuel, was consecrated to the work of the ministry. "*I have lent him to the Lord. As long as he liveth he shall be lent to the Lord.*" *Lent*, that is, *returned*, according to the literal translation. Happy mother—happy mothers, I may say. How many are now rejoicing with their sons preëminent in glory, who were first in the ranks of the church militant here. I need only mention, as representatives of the brilliant catalogue, such names as Timothy, Augustine, Whitefield, Wesley, Edwards, Doddridge, Dwight, whose infancy blossomed, whose youth ripened beneath the smiles and tears of maternal piety. There is no feature in the picture of domestic beauty so attractive as that of the pious, anxious mother, watching the expanding mind of her child, that it may seize the preöccupying influence of heavenly truth. It is work for an angel. Each lesson is a seal for eternity. Thus was George instructed. There was not an individual in the family who had any sympathy with the pious toil of the mother; but her task was softened and relieved by the recollection of other mothers who had gone before her, and by the anticipation of her heavenly reward.

There may be said to be a time when the care of the child naturally transfers itself from the mother to the father; I mean that period when the severer studies are to become objects of pursuit. Mrs. Lovell had done her part in the fear of God, and in the faith of his promises. No indications of piety, however, were observed in her son—nothing beyond that general sobriety which is the result of careful moral training. This, too, was occasionally disturbed by sallies of temper, which too plainly demonstrated the wickedness that is "bound in the heart of a child." The spirit of disobedience also at times burst through the frail barriers of education and example, and compelled the father to exercise the stern severity of the rod.

When George had reached the age of sixteen, death cast his deepest shadow over that lovely family, by removing her that was its light and its ornament. The wife and the mother were no more, but the Christian, the saint, lived with God in heaven. George was called from school to witness the dying struggles of his beloved mother, whose triumphant faith bespoke a spirit "quite on the verge of heaven." That hour, with its sad accompaniments, could never be effaced from his recollection. The natural heavens were darkened by a rising storm; clouds dense and black rolled on clouds; peals of thunder long and deep, rather than sudden and loud, resounded along the sky; and in the midst of these solemn and sublime exhibitions of nature, the soul of the dying Christian took its flight to the region of everlasting peace and repose. It seemed like death and judgment combined. But while their sombre images were presented to the mind, another image, even that of the triumph and security of the redeemed soul, served to gild the scene with a bright and tender ray, and to diffuse consolation throughout the afflicted family.

A class of sensations entirely new now took possession of the bosom of George. He felt himself motherless. For the first time in his life he knew what it is to be a mourner. Death had taken companions from his side, but never before had laid his icy hand on his heart. Every fibre of that heart shrunk at the touch. Can it be, he silently asked himself, that I have no mother; no *mother* to love me, to guide me, to pray for me? Reader, have you ever lost a mother? If you have, you understand me when I say it is then that the man, the woman, becomes a child again—not in weakness, not in the evanescent emotions of childish age, but in affection, in passion, in principle, in all that is beautiful in filial love. Then, every remembered act of disrespect, of disobedience, of neglect, pains the soul with more than childlike sorrow—a sorrow scarcely relieved by the more grateful recollection of kindness rendered and duty discharged.

The seriousness of George was enhanced by ill health He imagined, though as the event proved without foundation, that the fatal germ of the same disorder under which his mother sunk existed within him; and while he expected soon perhaps to follow her to eternity, he shuddered at the thought of the endless separation that would imbitter that eternity to his lost soul. Such a prospect as this, superadded to the thought of an early death—of earthly hopes crushed in the bud—of separation from loved friends and companions here—of the utter uselessness which the event of death would stamp on all those labored acquisitions which were great in his own eyes—of soon leaving all in this life that was brilliant in promise—such a prospect, I say, was of itself sufficient to hasten the decay, if not the dissolution of a constitution at no time remarkable for vigor.

He had no discernment of the spiritual beauty and consolation of those words which were among the last on the lips of his expiring mother, and which were engraven on the marble of her tomb: "Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil, for thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff they comfort me." He felt like a lonely wanderer amid vast and comfortless solitudes. When he saw the funeral preparations, when the pastor came to condole with the bereaved family, when friends came to mingle their sympathetic tears, and especially when the first movement was made by the bearers to transfer the cold and coffined remains of that saint from the table to the bier, from that sweet living home to the home of the dead, how did the sadness of his heart grow deeper and more painful. Then the deep-toned toll of the church-bell, as the procession began to move, vibrated on his heart with a new and strange effect. The hollow sound of the loose earth, as it fell upon the coffin—how saddening! And when he returned home, and saw his disconsolate father and mourning sisters, all in their sable drapery, all the sub-

jects of undissembled grief, he felt that with this eternity he had much to do.

Religion, he now thought, was the most desirable thing on earth; the absolutely necessary thing for heaven. At times he prayed; he wept alone; he confessed on his knees his sins to God. No earthly ear heard one of his sighs or groans; no mind suspected that the sadness of his countenance was any thing but the effect of natural grief for the loss of a beloved friend. He was treated accordingly. He was sympathized with, but not addressed as an anxious sinner. Nothing was done by his pastor to draw out an expression of his feelings. He preached a solemn, beautiful, and eloquent funeral sermon, which justly commemorated the exemplary virtues and the triumphant faith of the pious dead; but he gave no private personal warning to the impenitent living. And this, too, at a time when the hearts of eight children were, like the softened wax, susceptible of any impression. Kindness and tenderness were among the qualities of this excellent man; but he could not, or would not, administer pointed reproof and warning. He was to be commended rather for his pulpit-excellence than his pastoral faithfulness. Yet this last was what George stood in perishing need of. He told me it was his firm belief, that if he had been faithfully dealt with at that crisis, by him who had the charge of his soul, or by the professed people of God, he would, by his blessing, have yielded; if the way of salvation had been shown to him, he would, with his aid, have walked in it. He knew not what he must do. He scarcely knew the nature of his own feelings. Time, however, seemed as nothing to him—eternity as every thing.

When the first effervescence of sorrow had in a measure subsided, George resumed his studies preparatory to his entrance into college. Possessing an active mind and a keen relish for the dead languages, he studied night and day the Latin and the Greek, with no interruption save that

the image of his departed mother would often cross the page on which his mind was intent. The slightest association would call it up with great force and tenderness, nor did it begin to fade from the mental eye, so long as he continued near the scene of her death, or the spot of her burial. With this image there never failed to be connected the idea of her piety, her prayers, her heavenly walk, her faithful instructions, her dying admonitions. But against the concentrated force of all these, the enthusiasm of study prevailed, and my friend preferred the honors of scholarship to the blessings of Christianity. How often has he wondered that the Spirit of God did not at that critical period bid him a final, a returnless farewell! How often has such a crisis sealed up for ever the hopes of youth!

The time soon arrived when he was to leave home, and enter the walls of a college—a sphere entirely new—encircled with temptations, not merely to the indulgence of intellectual ambition, but of gay companionship, of—what shall I call it?—gregarious indolence, of fun and folly, of many things which no governmental laws can restrain or reach; which nothing but the predominant spirit of religion can control. Surrounded as he was by thoughtless young men, courted and caressed by the best scholars, proud of his own capacities of attainment, he might have fallen a victim the very first year of his collegiate life, but for two things.

The first was, the remembrance of his sainted mother. No living voice could have spoken with more impressive effect to his conscience, than did the silence of her grave. She had taught him to reverence the Sabbath as none but God's—as the keystone of all civil and sacred institutions—the day when it becomes an absolute duty to turn the mind from secular to sacred subjects. Accordingly, under the influence of an enlightened natural conscience, he regularly devoted the more private hours of the Sabbath to books of a strictly spiritual character. He had, however, a sufficient

amount of good sense not to mistake good acts and habits for real spirituality of mind. At the same time he might be said to indulge a kind of self-righteous hope that he was in a fair way to the kingdom of heaven.

The second circumstance which powerfully restrained, and even highly excited him, was a religious revival which commenced during the last term of his first year in college. He had contracted, before this revival commenced, a fondness for what he then thought the innocent, but afterwards knew to be the pernicious amusement of dancing. Having once tasted the gay and guilty* pleasure, his love for it became excessive. Excessive and extravagant it might well be called, since he was willing not only to sacrifice his time, but his very soul for it. It was the reluctance to give up this foolish, but fascinating amusement, that barred all access to permanent serious impressions; and George has told me that it was the conviction of his own mind, that he should have embraced religion in that revival, had not his passion for this new-found pleasure absorbed every other consideration.

He that has witnessed a revival in a college knows how peculiar is its character. The intellectual standing of its subjects, their local contiguity, the solemn regularity of the devotional exercises, the fact that all are young men, the stillness of every occurring scene, the energy of religion working through the social principle, which exists so strongly in *classes*, and in the tenants of the same room—all these circumstances, combined with the certain prospect that each one of these anxious youth is to exert an influence upon so

* *Guilty*, because it dissipates the time and the mind, opens the door to licentious imaginations, wastes money that might be better appropriated, encourages the use of wine and strong drink, banishes serious reflection, promotes levity, folly, and useless conversation, indisposes to prayer and reading the Bible, incites infatuated youth to ridicule the ministers of religion and pious Christians, and leads on the soul to perdition.

many immortal minds, serve to render the place and the occasion awful in the highest degree.

There was one occasion on which George absolutely trembled under the powerful exhortation of a member of the Junior class, and let fall such expressions as inspired hope among the Christian students that he was the subject of serious impressions and convictions. But these feelings soon departed. There was but one member of college, now a devoted and self-denying missionary in a foreign land, who dared to visit him in his room, and address him individually on the subject of his soul's salvation. Would it have been believed that the opposition of a heart so trained as was George's, would have flashed out under the kindly warnings of such a friend? Yet such was the fact. He *hated* the person of his adviser. And what was this but hatred of God? How true, that "the carnal mind is enmity against God!" He outlived his convictions. He survived the revival, unaffected by its renovating power. He was of course prepared to relax even the formal strictness which was the result of his religious education.

In the second year at college he made a retrograde step in point of the observance of the Sabbath. From reading spiritual books he passed by an easy transition, which satisfied his conscience, to the reading of the more serious kind of poetry, such as Young's Night Thoughts, Milton's Paradise Lost, etc. This he persuaded himself *could not* be wrong on the Sabbath. Without entering into the question of the moral rectitude of reading such works on the Sabbath, it is sufficient to say, that he who is satisfied with mere works of taste, however solemn the drapery which envelopes them, must be far from the kingdom of heaven. The third year found him ready for another step, to read Shakspeare, Dryden, etc. By the fourth year he could coolly sit down to the reading of novels and plays of all kinds. Serious books were utterly forgotten—literary ambition had full possession of his soul—the memory of his mother ceased

to exert its beneficent power, and my friend was about to drift away upon the uncertain sea of life, when the star of Bethlehem arose.

> "That star alone, of all the train,
> Can fix the sinner's wandering eye."

He was sitting alone in his room on the Sabbath, having indulged himself with absence from church for the purpose of devouring a favorite novel, when his mind was suddenly arrested by the Holy Spirit, and the whole current of his thoughts instantaneously diverted from their earthly channel towards the awful things of eternity. He was alarmed, highly excited, distressingly convicted. He thought he had received a summons to the bar of God. He expected in a few moments to die. He paced the room in a frenzy of despair. He threw himself upon the bed, and with the fearful earnestness and energy of a dying man, pleaded in piteous accents for mercy. He seemed to tremble on the verge of life, and felt all the horrors of dying alone, without comfort and without hope. When the tumult of his feelings had in a measure subsided, his reflections, though less confused, were keen and painful; not the less so, from the fact that they were constrained in his own bosom. Pride, or shame, or something kindred to these, compelled him to lock up the distressing secret, while the strange change in his appearance was attributed by his friends to bodily sickness. The very mention of the word *death* agitated his soul to its inmost centre. He relinquished his studies, and returned home. He prayed and wept night and day in secret, still afraid of his impending doom, and afraid to disclose his feelings to any individual. He passed his minister without daring to speak. When he lay down to sleep at night, he expected to awake in hell! At length, by a mighty effort, he called a pious sister aside, and with a burst of tears, which mingled with her own at the recital, he *told his convictions.* She threw her arms around his neck,

and continued to weep for joy at such intelligence. The deceiver, however, was busy with his temptations. Between the constraining convictions of his conscience, and his love for the world, there was a deadly struggle. Could he give up all for Christ? As if resolved to let temptation try its worst with him, he stole out by night, under all the pressure of his convictions, and took his way to a ballroom, where an assemblage of his well-known companions were engaged in the dance. He entered the room, brilliant with lights, gay with music, and glittering with the attractions of beauty and fashion. He stood and gazed upon the scene. He was welcomed with the smiles of the young and the beautiful. "*Can I give this up?*" he inwardly asked himself. It was a moment big with eternal consequences. The scales were equally balanced between heaven and hell. One decisive act would probably settle his destiny for ever. In this perilous extremity, mercy prevailed in the very face of rebellion. "*I will give up the world—I will decide for God,*" he thought within himself, and turning round, he rushed out of the chamber, nor ever again turned his face to the follies and amusements of the world.

The night on which George renounced the ballroom, with its splendid and attractive amusements, was one of thick darkness to his soul. It might, perhaps, have been expected that such a renunciation would be immediately followed by a surrender of his heart to God, if, indeed, it were not the consequence of such a surrender. But I have too often learned in my intercourse with the awakened, that they are willing to give up, sometimes with alacrity, sometimes with reluctance, one thing after another, if they may but reserve the very thing which first of all God requires—*the heart.* Revivals of religion tear away many things from the sinner, while he still refuses the supreme love of his soul to the great object on which it should be bestowed. I have known Universalists give up, under the influence of a

revival, their fatal, flattering doctrine, and there stop. I have known Deists, under the same influence, honor the revelation of God, without submitting their souls to its power. I have known the drunkard transformed to a sober and temperate citizen, without being transformed into a living Christian. I remember to have seen the moral man, perhaps the most difficult case, compelled by the "force of truth" to acknowledge the righteousness of Christ as the only possible ground of hope, without building on that glorious basis. I have seen, also, the gay beauty, to whom the charms of this world's amusements were struck dead by this holy influence, turn from them in disgust, but not to lift her ravished eye to the glories of religion. I recognize in these facts a most powerful demonstration of the collateral good effects of revivals of religion, but I recognize also that melancholy character—*an almost Christian.*

George had liked to have been an almost Christian. He gave up his amusements, for how can they "minister to a mind diseased?" He gave up his irreligious associates; his studies; his ambition; his convivial frolics; his hopes for this life; his every thing but—THE HEART. Here was the struggle—the bitter agony. He saw hell before him; for when he arrived at home he feared to walk across the floor, lest it should open beneath him a passage to the abode of the damned. He felt that "sting of death," which is "sin," beyond all the acuteness of mortal agony, for it was sharpened by "the law." He turned to look after the cross of Christ, of which he had read, but saw nothing, save dense and threatening clouds, like those which enveloped the brow of Calvary in the hour of the crucifixion.

And while he thus groaned beneath the load of his distress, what think you, beloved reader, was the means—the simple means of his release and his relief? A letter—a plain, humble letter, from a Christian minister. This kind

friend, having learned from his sister the state of his mind, immediately sat down and wrote him a clear, plain, and faithful letter; delineating the nature of genuine conviction, describing the path through which the sinner must return to God, and urging him without a moment's delay to commit his soul to Jesus Christ. He read it with eagerness; his heart palpitated—his eyes filled with tears—he dropped the letter on the floor, sunk on his knees, and poured out his soul in believing prayer to God. That moment, to use his own expression, "a flash of glory from the cross struck athwart my soul—such as, while memory lasts, I can never forget. It filled me with amazement at the mercy of God. It subdued and melted me into a delicious submission to the will of God and the merits of Jesus Christ. He seemed a precious—precious Saviour—all my salvation and all my desire."

Such was his account of the memorable scene. The time—the place—the circumstances of the event—the event itself—seemed in his narrative like a present, living reality. Nothing could exceed the enthusiasm with which, at the distance of years, he related the circumstances of his conversion. He now read the Bible with a new and strange delight. Its pages, before dark and uninteresting, were now full of light and love. They were luminous with Jesus. Not that new light was in them, but he had new eyes to discern that light. He loved to spend much time in affectionate prayer to God. He felt a peculiar, an earnest regard for Christians. He longed for the salvation of sinners. He thought and believed that he could convince all of the excellence and loveliness of Christ. He rose, as opportunity presented, in meetings, and exhorted all to embrace that Saviour in whom he found such "joy unspeakable." He even cast a longing eye towards the sacred desk, though he felt himself at an immeasurable distance from that awe-inspiring station.

It was evident, however, to his friends, that God in-

tended to make use of him for his glory. And now with what deep emotion did he and they remember his early consecration by his sainted mother to the holy ministry of the Gospel! Truly, in his case, it could not be said that "praying breath was spent in vain." His venerable grandmother wept for joy at her first interview with her favorite grandson, after his return to God. He repaired with renewed vigor to his college studies and exercises, and though there was a period when Satan tempted and prevailed with him to yield to an unholy declension, the faithful reproof of a Christian classmate was blessed in rousing him from his sinful dream. Chastised and humbled by the affecting remembrance of his sins, mortified to the very soul that he should so soon wander from his kind Saviour, and grieve the Holy Spirit, he commenced anew the Christian course, and gave fresh promise of piety and usefulness. He graduated with the full honors of the best of his class, and at the public commencement excited the highest hopes among his friends and the friends of religion. His father, indeed, having been long in political life, and a distinguished citizen of the commonwealth of ———, would have preferred that the son of whom he was so proud should seek the post of civil honor and distinction; but with characteristic wisdom, and a kind policy, shaped in a measure perhaps by a tender regard for his departed wife, he declined interfering with the inclinations of his son, or counteracting the advice of Christian friends. He had great confidence in his abilities, having had occasion to peruse well-written compositions of George at the age of thirteen, at which age also he had left him for months in the sole charge of his business.

In a few weeks George, having previously made a public profession of religion, entered the Theological seminary at ———, with a deep and awful impression of the sacred work to which he felt himself called and devoted. He pursued his studies with diligence and ardor, and after

three years entered, with great zeal and delight, into the work of preaching the Gospel.

He was in due time ordained to a pastoral charge, and I rejoice to be able to say that, during the ten years of his ministry which have elapsed, he is believed to have been instrumental of the conversion of about ONE THOUSAND souls, some of whom are themselves preachers of the Gospel, and some also have been, and are eminently useful as laymen. Occupying an important and responsible station in the church, he is still engaged in that glorious work to WHICH HE WAS CONSECRATED AT HIS BIRTH BY HIS MOTHER, and called in the fulness of time by the faithful covenant God of his mother.

Fathers, mothers, what you have read is literal fact, without embellishment or exaggeration. Can you say, "For this child I prayed?" Look at that bud of immortality, which is unfolding itself at your side. Water it with your tears. Breathe over it your prayers. Watch it day and night. Present it to God. Surrender it up, not only without the shadow of a mental reservation, but with the full energy of faith; and, through the blessing of the Holy Spirit, it shall not only bloom in beauty here, but yield the fruits of everlasting righteousness hereafter.

Of George Lovell's *conviction of sin*, he said to a friend, referring to the anguish of his mind on a Sabbath in his last year at college, "I wish you may never be obliged to experience the horrors of a guilty conscience as I did. What material fire, though it should blaze with sevenfold intensity, could ever inflict such pains as I felt that day? I could not doubt but the Saviour meant by 'the worm that never dieth,' the stings of an ever-living conscience; nor that he knew all that was, or was to be, in the human heart."

"Can you specify the feelings you then had," said his friend, "and which you think were conviction of sin?"

"Can I ever forget them, you should rather ask, when they rose in my mind with such appalling minuteness? I will state them in order.

1. "I clearly saw the justice of God in sending me—as I supposed I was going—to hell. I not only understood, but *felt* my doom to be just. All good and holy beings seemed to approve it.

2. "I could not see how it was possible for me, possessing the character I did, ever to hold any communion with God, ever to look upon him as a pleasant being, or to take any complacency in him. To banish myself as far as possible from his presence, however wretched the alternative, I felt would be comparatively desirable. I felt that, although the righteous 'hath hope in his death,' I must justly be 'driven away in my wickedness.'

3. "In the course of the four weeks' solemn reflections which ensued, agitated as it often was with the most gloomy forebodings, I was led deeply to abhor the whole tenor of my past life. Among the things which pained me were broken resolutions, violated promises, abused mercies, deliberate delays, disobedience to maternal admonitions, neglect of the Bible, and, in general, utter forgetfulness of God, or not remembering him in any sense which could be acceptable to him.

4. "My heart was deeply affected with my *ingratitude* to God. This sin for a time seemed to absorb others, and I wept and prayed, and confessed the black ingratitude of my life to so good and kind a being as God. 'Against thee, thee only have I sinned, and done this evil in thy sight, that thou mightest be justified when thou speakest, and be clear when thou judgest.'

5. "I felt astonishment that any sinner could for a moment remain unconcerned, when he had every reason to believe he had not made his peace with God.

6. "I was convinced that I deserved to suffer the execution of the full penalty of the law, which pronounces its curse upon all those who do not render it personal, perpetual, and perfect obedience. Gal. 3 : 10. I felt the force of the truth, 'the law is our schoolmaster, to bring us to Christ.' I writhed under the severity of its rod. I was sore with its chastisement; I felt my whole head sick—yes, my 'whole heart faint.' When this commandment came, sin revived, and I was ready to die. Had I been willing at once to die, as to all hopes of solid comfort and genuine happiness, except in the abounding merits of Jesus Christ, I should not have hesitated about renouncing all at once. I should not have lingered around any of the scenes of my former follies and iniquities, and, like the wife of Lot, looked back upon my darling pleasures in Sodom, while the messengers of mercy were hurrying me to a place of refuge from the impending storm."

In *turning to God* he experienced, 1. A peace of mind which he had never before enjoyed. 2. Joy in the service of God. 3. A contempt for the things of the world. 4. Admiration of the character and work of Christ. 5. Fondness for prayer. 6. Longing desires for the salvation of sinners. 7. A sense of reliance on the perfect merits and finished righteousness of Christ.

The *obstacles* which, after thirteen years' experience, he has found most powerful to resist the sanctification of the soul, are, 1. The strong influence of remaining sin. 2. Failure in the regular discharge of the duties of secret devotion. 3. The company and conversation of lukewarm professors, or of friends who are indifferent to religion. 4. Neglect of self-examination. 5. Superficial reading of the Bible. 6. Want of habitual contemplation of the character of God.

DUTIES

OF

CHURCH-MEMBERS.

BY REV. THOMAS H. SKINNER, D. D.

Every man who would have a conscience void of offence, should understand his various obligations and duties. What duties are of higher importance than those of members of the church of God; and yet what duties are more generally neglected? As this neglect may in some measure arise from not well knowing or justly appreciating these sacred duties, we shall devote the following pages to a brief consideration of them.

Our subject is, the *duties of church-members as such.* These persons may be regarded as members either of the church universal, or of some particular and local church; belonging to one, they belong to both; and as they are viewed in one or the other of these relations, a correspondent view will present itself of the character and deportment that become them.

Regarded as members of the universal church, as fellow-citizens with saints of all ages and places, as of the household of God, embracing his holy family both in heaven and earth, what manner of persons ought they to be in all holy conversation and godliness: how peculiar, how different in spirit, in purpose, in pursuit, in manner of life, from the world around them, that lieth in wickedness. Am I a

member of the church and general assembly of the first-born which are written in heaven? Am I of God's household; of the same family with Abel, and Enoch, and Noah; with Abraham, and Moses, and Samuel, and Elijah, and all the prophets; with Paul, and Peter, and John, and all the apostles, and martyrs, and saints in light; men of whom the world was not worthy? And shall I live amongst men like a citizen of the earth, minding earthly things, walking after the flesh, and fulfilling sensual aims and desires? No more a foreigner and a stranger to this holy society, ought I not to be as a foreigner and stranger to the world?

But the better way to obtain definite and useful impressions of the character becoming members of the universal church, is to view them as belonging to some distinctly organized portion of that church: our thoughts will thus fix upon distinct classes of duties, and we cannot fail to obtain a more just conception of the obligations arising out of church-membership, taken either in the larger or narrower sense.

1. One branch of the duty of every church-member, as such, relates to the *pastor of the church.* He is himself a church-member, and may claim from his Christian brethren, in common with themselves, whatever regard that designation gives a right to. Nor should intelligence, moral worth, and amiableness of manners, be unacknowledged in him, more than in another man. But there are special reasons why the members of a church should hold their pastor in respect.

He is to them, and with their own consent, the messenger and minister of Christ, an ambassador of God, whose official acts, rightly performed, have their seal and sanction in heaven.

Besides, he ought, at least by his own people, to be

highly esteemed in love for his work's sake, the object of which is the advancement of their everlasting good, and the measures and methods of which are, of all others, the most laborious and wasting to flesh and blood; including deep and continual meditations, preaching in season and out of season, numberless spiritual conferences with individuals and families, and daily solicitudes about the success of his work. Let Paul, in two places, instruct you in this respect. "We beseech you, brethren, to know them which labor among you, and are over you in the Lord, and admonish you, and esteem them very highly in love for their work's sake." 1 Thess. 5 : 12, 13. And again, "Obey them that have the rule over you, and submit yourselves; for they watch for your souls as they that must give account." Heb. 13 : 17. The detail of the duties comprised in this obligation thus generally enforced, cannot be necessary. Let it be in the spirit of a church-member to esteem his pastor very highly in love, and to obey him in the Lord; and he will need no illumination as to particular duties under this head.

2. Certain men, in many churches, are called to assist the pastor in government; and these persons will receive peculiar regard from every worthy church-member. Their station is not held for their own sake, but as necessary to the peace and prosperity of the people. And as a state dishonors itself when it does not hold its own officers in respect, so every church-member is divided against his church, and does it dishonor, who behaves himself unseemly towards these brethren while discharging their appropriate duties. These duties, and the correlative ones of the people, need not be here minutely specified: a docile and well-disposed mind can hardly mistake them. This only let me say, that

when a member of the church disdains to receive admonition from those authorized to give it, as occasion requires, or when he speaks of them contemptuously, or carries himself proudly towards them in any way, he reproaches his profession, and is a scandal to the church.

3. The members of a particular church ought, if possible, to *acquaint themselves with one another*. Some churches are so large that it is almost impracticable for each member to make himself acquainted with all the rest; and there are persons in almost every church who, from various causes—some from humility, some from pride and worldliness of spirit—keep themselves so much away from their brethren as to make acquaintance with them difficult; and there are unworthy members, who are yet not liable to excommunication, with whom spiritually-minded Christians cannot, and ought not to be familiar; but that members of a church ought to know one another, as a general principle, cannot be questioned.

Associated with them in the same communion, and united to one another, like the members of the body, according to St. Paul's illustration, alienation and strangeness seem almost unnatural. Professing sameness of character, of spirit, of interest, of hope; professing to have their hearts occupied and swayed by that pure love which rules in heaven, and meeting together in the same place several times every week; joining their hearts and voices in prayer and praise; communing together often at the Lord's supper; coöperating in various voluntary associations for the furtherance of their common cause; mingling thus together continually in holy places and services, how unmeet, and but for its commonness I had almost said unlikely, that they should scarcely know each other's names and countenances.

Unrestrained intimacy and familiarity, such as idlers and busy bodies, who go from house to house, and other ill-bred persons, practise, is as undesirable and unchristian as it is vulgar and uncivil; nor is it to be expected or wished, that the lines by which the several classes in society are circumstantially separated from each other, should run into one, and be undistinguishable in the church's enclosure. Though "the brother of low degree should rejoice," as being in Christ "exalted," and "the rich," as being "made low," yet their different degrees, low and rich, remain. Similarity of condition, education, cast of mind, habits, prescribes rules for classification and intercourse, not less among Christians than others; and utility as well as propriety, is manifestly consulted by observing these rules; and hence there should, and needs must be, circles of different degrees of acquaintanceship in the same church. But that there ought to be among all the members that kind and fraternal feeling, which makes mutual access easy, and gives free scope for the prompt exercise of Christian sympathy and fellowship as occasions may require, and leaves what degrees of acquaintanceship with each other remain among them, resolvable into some other than a blameworthy cause, is clear to every one's sense of right, and fitness, and duty.

4. The law of *brotherly love* should have special sway over the members of a church. This law, as being enforced with new and unparalleled motives, was Christ's *new* commandment to all his followers; obedience to which would demonstrate their discipleship to a Master in whom love to them and to all mankind was so powerful a principle. And if it be so necessary for all Christians to cultivate the love of one another, shall members of the same church neglect it and be guiltless? Shall they meet, and sing, and pray,

and commune together, from week to week, and year to year, and yet be at heart cold and strange to one another?

If the church be very large, it may be with love, as with personal acquaintance, each may not be able to form a vivid and confidential affection for every one of the rest; and members of a certain class, earthly-minded and inconsistent members, cannot be the objects of *brotherly* love, which is the love of complacency, delight in Christ's image in his saints. But with these restrictions, if the members of a church are not kindly affectioned towards one another in brotherly love, they are, as a community, devoid of spiritual comfort, dignity, and strength; forsaken, in a great measure, by the Holy Spirit, and in danger of irretrievable declension.

The true glory and might of the church is brotherly love. It was this affection, as exhibited by the first Christians, that enabled them to make their triumphant way against the united powers of hell and earth, and to extend the kingdom of their Lord, before that generation passed away, to the utmost bounds of the civilized world. And it was the want of brotherly love among the professors of Christianity in after-periods, that led to those divisions and desolations by which the course of the church, thenceforth until now, has been marked; nor will the waste places of Zion be repaired, and her boundaries be enlarged, as prophecy requires, until she again clothes herself in the beauty, the majesty, and strength of brotherly love.

5. The members of a church ought to cherish a lively *sympathy for one another*. Persons so related should take a deep interest in each other's happiness; should bear each other's burdens, and enjoy each other's blessings. They should have the same care one for another; and whether

one member suffer, all the members should suffer with him, or one member be honored, all the members should rejoice with him. When the members of a church are indifferent towards each other's sorrows, and envious of one another's prosperity, they can have but little evidence in themselves of belonging to Him who "carried our sorrows," and died for our sins; and they certainly give none which is convincing to the world.

6. It is incumbent on church-members to seek each other's *spiritual advancement and edification.* If any be overtaken in a fault, they who are spiritual ought to restore such in the spirit of meekness, considering themselves lest they also be tempted. If any be in spiritual trouble, they who have endured like conflicts ought with great tenderness and sympathy to counsel and encourage them. If any are feeble-minded in the faith, the strong should endeavor to confirm them. If any go astray, they ought to be sought after by those who observe their wanderings, or who are best fitted to reclaim them. And in general all the members should pray for and with one another, admonish and exhort one another, consider one another to provoke unto love and good works; and cheerfully employ their graces and gifts to the edification of the church, keeping order as to manner and time, and taking in all respects due heed to themselves.

Yet, have we not to lament that there are many such unprofitable and unworthy members, who show no concern whether religion flourishes in the church or declines; whether their fellow-members walk worthily or unworthily of their privileges; whether the Holy Spirit does or does not utterly abandon them to desolation and destruction? Some are hindered from taking an active part in

furthering the church's good, by nervous timidity; some by false modesty and diffidence; some by worldly pride; and some by entire want of the life and power of religion. Let just discrimination be made; but let all such church-members examine well the reasons of their indifference.

7. Every church-member should heedfully avoid and resist all *causes of alienation* and division among his fellow-members, endeavoring, as the apostle enjoins, "to keep the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace." If it be the duty of Christians, as much as lieth in them, to live peaceably with all men, it is much more their duty to live peaceably with all Christians; and more so still, with all who belong to the same church with themselves. "Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity;" but this is not a more agreeable spectacle than that of a divided brotherhood is painful and revolting.

A divided brotherhood of Christians, among whom so many peculiar causes require that there be but one heart and one soul! Is such a state of things consistent with the church's progress in spirituality? Are Christians growing in grace, or laboring successfully for the advancement of the Gospel among themselves, when they are divided against one another in spirit? It is impossible. The heavenly dove has flown away from these contenders; and now what do they gain from the ministrations of the Gospel and its ordinances? How serious, how sacred, then, the duty of shunning or resisting the first appearance of whatever has a tendency to produce division; and what greater mischief-makers can be found than its authors? There may be, indeed, such general corruption in a church, that purity of spirit and fidelity of action may be inconsistent with peace; division may be that church's only hope. But even

in such a case, to faithfulness should be joined meekness, and gentleness, and all those kind graces by which, if possible, division may be avoided.

When members of a church are captious and censorious; when, instead of confessing their faults one to another, they carry themselves as if they had no faults of their own, and treat others as if they had nothing but faults; when they withdraw themselves from their own assemblies on the pretext of their not being conducted in the proper spirit; when they secretly alienate their fellow-members from the pastor and those who help him in government; when they aim to nourish a party in the bosom of their church, and introduce or favor measures and proceedings known to be unwelcome—in all these instances, they sow the seeds of discord, and prove themselves the children of contention and confusion.

8. Every member of a church who walks orderly, and according to his covenant with God and his brethren, will pay regular *attendance on the ministrations of the word and ordinances.* Allowance being made for extraordinary and unlooked-for hinderances, it is as much the duty of every church-member to attend the stated meetings for public worship, as it is the pastor's duty to conduct the exercises of those meetings. In a general view, the truth of this remark is instantly manifest. The stated meetings of a congregation may be too numerous, especially during seasons of remarkable revival, to admit of their being all attended by every member; and when they are so, every member ought not to be expected to be always present. But when they are not more numerous than custom in all the churches requires; when there is but one weekly service besides the meetings on the Sabbath, and that service

is deemed essential to the spiritual interests of the congregation, habitual attendance on all the stated meetings is not more the pastor's than all the people's duty. For if some may justifiably forsake the assembling themselves together, so may others, and so may all.

Strong excuses, I know, are thought to be urged by some. They plead their engagements in benevolent labors and societies; but if that plea will suffice in some cases, it will in others; and our weekly lectures may soon be almost entirely deserted. But that excuse ought in no case to be received. Our benevolent societies must not induce neglect of the soul; and the soul is neglected when the services of the sanctuary are forsaken. The number and labors of those societies, instead of justifying us in less frequent and engaged approaches to God, in his house, make such approaches more necessary. The business of those societies may be performed without devotion or piety; and is, or doubtless will soon be so performed, if the peculiar services and hours of piety be not solemnly observed. If this business makes us inattentive to our hearts, it will prevent the salvation of our souls, though called benevolent. There are no inconsistencies in the kingdom of God, no clashing of duties with duties; and since the duties of the sanctuary are, by universal consent, unchangeable and necessary, those of benevolence cannot require them to be neglected.

It is the duty of every member of a church to bear his just portion of the church's necessary *expenses*. It is the will of God that they who preach the Gospel should live of the Gospel. Their maintenance, therefore, is obligatory upon the church, and a share of the burden falls on every church-member; for if one may exonerate himself, so may

every one. And why should any one refuse to obey this ordinance of God? Why is not the laborer in this case worthy of his hire? Does he render useless service? Is it useless to watch for souls, and to feed God's heritage with divine knowledge and understanding? "If we have sown unto you spiritual things, is it a great thing if we shall reap your carnal things?" And if the ministers of Christ give their whole time and strength to the service of the church, whence is their support to come if the church withhold support? Why should theirs be the only case in which recompense for labor should be thought undue? "Who goeth a warfare, at any time, at his own charges? Who planteth a vineyard, and eateth not of the fruit thereof? Or who feedeth a flock, and eateth not of the milk of the flock?"

But besides the support of the pastor, there are other expenses incident to the continuance of a church, which ought to be distributed in just proportions among the members. The relief of poor brethren, keeping the house of God in order, properly conducting the sacred music, attention to the external convenience and comfort of the assembly in time of worship, all demand, and ought to receive pecuniary contribution from every church-member who does not live by charity. And that member of the church who enjoys the church's privileges, and bears not his part of her burdens, but leaves these to be sustained by others, sets an example of inconsistency, not to say dishonesty, which, if followed, would abolish the being of the church.

10. It is binding on every church-member to coöperate with his brethren in their exertions for the *furtherance of the Gospel in the world*. This, next to the glory of God, is the highest end and purpose of churches. If it may be

truly said of private Christians, they are "the salt of the earth," they are "the light of the world," with greater emphasis may it be said of local churches. If a private Christian is required by the law and spirit of his religion to spend and be spent for the conversion of the world, is not the same thing required of a number of Christians associated together in a church? Ought not these Christians, in their holy and happy pale, to take counsel with each other, and devise the best plans for exerting their utmost combined strength for the advancement of the Gospel among those who are without it? Surely, a church that contents itself with seeking its own promotion, loses sight of its proper aim and design, and wants, in a lamentable degree, the spirit of its Saviour and his religion. This is now manifest, and it begins to be generally acknowledged by the churches; and there are societies in almost all the churches formed to aid in the glorious work of converting the world to God.

And what worthy church-member can refuse to take part in the contributions and sacrifices of these truly Christian societies? Can the refuser vindicate his conduct, when if all should imitate his example, the efforts of Christendom for the propagation of the Gospel would come to an end? He cannot. When he joined the church, he virtually covenanted to coöperate with his fellow-members in the necessary exertions for the spread of the Gospel, and if he had not so covenanted, the spirit and precepts of the religion he professes oblige him.

But are these societies necessary? They are. Without Bible societies, how can the Bible be printed and distributed in all the languages of the earth? Without missionary societies, how can living teachers be sent among the

nations? Without education societies, how can men be trained in sufficient numbers for the work of the ministry? Without tract societies how can the mass of the people be imbued with divine knowledge? And without Sunday-school societies, how can the rising generation be rescued from corruption and ruin? All these societies are necessary. God has need of them all. And the demand of God is not met by that member of the church who does not contribute to their support according to his ability.

11. Finally, every member of a church ought to strengthen the influence of *church discipline*, by concurring in the just censure that may be pronounced against delinquents. What can bring backsliders and scandalous members to repentance, if the discipline of the church, solemnly administered, cannot? For church-members to impair the power of this benevolent instrumentality by taking part with the scandalous, is cruelty to them, as well as rebellion against church order. Scandalous persons, persons whose disorderly walk exposes the Christian profession to reproach, are apt, in their deadness and stupidity to all spiritual things, to despise ecclesiastical censure. And is it worthy of a professing Christian to encourage such persons in their fatal infatuation?

Now, having endeavored, under the guidance of the Scriptures in every particular, to set forth the duties of membership in the church of God, let me very briefly urge, in conclusion, some of the considerations which demand the faithful performance of these duties.

1. The *strength, prosperity, and usefulness of the church*, depend, under God, on her individual members discharging the obligations which their relation to her imposes and im-

plies. Let church-members be faithless, and what is the church herself but a mass of corruption? The light of Zion then shines, and her glory is come, and the world feels her reclaiming and sanctifying influence, when her sons and her daughters are in all respects dutiful and true to her, and to one another. But let it be otherwise, and the light of the world is quenched; the salt of the earth has lost its saltness, and is thenceforth good for nothing but to be cast out and trodden under foot of men. What persons living exert an influence so injurious, or do as much harm, as unfaithful and disorderly church-members?

2. You are bound by *covenant* and contract to perform these duties. Such a contract you have entered into both with the church and with God. Your baptism declares that you are under vows to the Lord, to walk in all his commandments and ordinances; and you renew these solemn engagements whenever you partake of the Lord's supper. How sacred are your obligations to be an exemplary church-member: how great your guilt if you are not! "When thou vowest a vow unto God, defer not to pay it; for he hath no pleasure in fools: pay that which thou hast vowed. Better is it that thou shouldst not vow, than that thou shouldst vow and not pay." Consider what influence your engagement would have upon you, if it were merely a worldly covenant, lawfully ratified and confirmed, between yourself and your fellow-men. You would not, even in that case, disregard it. The fear of the world's contempt and punishment, if not a sense of probity and self-respect, would make you mindful of your obligation. And will not the fear of eternal contempt and shame; will not love to God, and gratitude to Christ, and the pleasure of a good conscience, and the hope of heaven, keep you from violating

the solemn duties to the church, which you are bound, by covenant both with God and man, to fulfil?

3. Your conduct in this respect is the true *test of your personal piety*. You have no sufficient cause to think yourself truly pious, if you slight your duties as a member of the church. What are you the better for calling Christ Lord, Lord, if you do not the things which he commands you; or for professing to know God, if in works you disown him; or for having the form of godliness, if you deny its power; or for walking in the garb of a Christian, if you are, in example, an enemy to the cross of Christ? And are you obedient to Christ's commands, do you not disown God in works, do you not deny the power of godliness, are you not practically an enemy of the cross of Christ, if you are regardless of the sacred obligations of church-membership? What good evidence of personal holiness can they have, who, belonging to the household of God, care nothing for the order, and the peace, and the honor of that household? Are they not enemies to all righteousness, who thus violate the most awful of all the relations of righteousness? Who are wicked, who are unprincipled, who are disobedient and to every good work reprobate, who have consciences seared as with a hot iron, if not those members of the church who make light of the responsibilities and duties of members? What is the religion of such persons, but an abomination, a mockery in the sight of God, and a stumbling-block to the world? Of all persons the most hopelessly hardened, according to both observation and Scripture, are unfaithful members of the church. And hence I remark, finally, that,

4. Of all persons these are they whose *destruction will be the most fearful*. They will not only perish, but perish

more terribly than others. They will be cast out of the kingdom of God "into outer darkness, where are weeping," and wailing, "and gnashing of teeth." This, by express declaration of Scripture, is the doom of false-hearted and unfaithful members of the visible church. None sin as do they, and none, other things being equal, will be punished so severely. "The sinners in Zion are afraid; fearfulness hath surprised the hypocrites. Who among us shall dwell with the devouring fire? Who among us shall dwell with everlasting burnings?"

LOVE TO THE CHURCH.

I love thy kingdom, Lord,
The house of thine abode,
The church our blest Redeemer saved
With his own precious blood.

If e'er, to bless thy sons,
My voice or hands deny,
These hands let useful skill forsake,
This voice in silence die.

If e'er my heart forget
Her welfare or her woe,
Let every joy this heart forsake,
And every grief o'erflow.

For her my tears shall fall,
For her my prayers ascend;
To her my cares and toils be given,
Till toils and cares shall end. Watts.

No. 266.

BLIND BETSEY;

OR,

COMFORT FOR THE AFFLICTED.

AN AUTHENTIC NARRATIVE.

The writer was for many years intimately acquainted with the subject of this narrative, in which every statement may be *relied upon as a matter of fact*, being given, as nearly as possible, in her own simple words.

She was born of pious, but poor parents, in the West of England, had been early taught to read the Scriptures, and had committed to memory many of Dr. Watts' hymns and his catechisms. For this blessing she ever expressed the warmest gratitude to God, after the affliction which deprived her of sight at the age of thirteen. For some time she contrived to write a journal with her own hand. Her spelling was defective, but the letters were better formed, and the lines more uniform, than those not observant of the ingenuity of the blind would suppose possible. A few extracts will convey the state of her mind.

"The Lord has deprived me of sight to read his blessed word, but I bless him that he continued it to me so long; and above all, that he has given me a glimmering of spiritual sight, which is far better. When I had bodily sight, I was too apt to think it my own, but it was a *borrowed favor*. I suffer much pain, but if I have a minute's ease, I will ascribe it to the goodness of the Lord."

Betsey's loss of sight was attended with extreme pain; and during the first year of her blindness, she describes herself as "blind, both in body and soul." She remarks, "I knew nothing of divine things, till it pleased God to send a seizure in my knee: the pain was very great, so that I had

no rest by night or by day. Then the Lord began to work upon my mind with terror. I thought I might be taken off suddenly, and having no hope, I knew that I must then be for ever miserable: I had hell in my conscience." "I prayed, 'Lord, be merciful to me a sinner. Oh what must I do to be saved?'"

She was tempted to fear it was too late for her to seek pardon, till a few days afterwards a friend read to her the 17th chapter of John. She says, "Every word came to my soul quick and powerful as a two-edged sword. My soul was then set at liberty, though my sins were numberless as the sands upon the sea-shore. Jesus has washed them all in his precious blood. Eternity was no longer dreadful. I saw Jesus was my Saviour. Satan, that busy enemy, renewed his suggestions, but I was enabled to prostrate myself at the foot of the cross, and he fled from me. 'The blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth from all sin.'

> 'His name, and love, and gracious words,
> Have fixed my roving heart.'"

Soon after this period she writes, "Though I cannot see to read a word in *the book*, yet sometimes I have such sweet texts of Scripture come to my mind, as though spoken to me with power, that it bears my burden up. Those Christians who are blessed with bodily sight, cannot sufficiently prize the privilege. When they are burdened, they can go and look to the blessed word of God: let them praise God for it, and I will praise God that he applies his own words to my soul, though he has taken my sight."

She attached great value to the word of God, always requesting her friends who visited her, to read to her some portion of that "golden treasury," and uttering most earnestly her desire that they would not neglect to peruse it for themselves; adding, "Oh, I would give all I possess, or ever shall possess in this world, for *one half hour's sight*, to read part of that blessed book myself!"

She remarks in her diary, "My pain is very great, but I can rejoice in my pain, and bless God for my affliction.

If I had a thousand souls, and a thousand bodies, I would give up all to the hands of my Lord, to do with them as he pleases."

When she was about fifteen years old, she was again permitted to attend public worship. Her knee gave her great pain, but with much difficulty she walked to the house of God; this being the time when she first publicly avowed herself to be a disciple of Christ. Her lovely expression of countenance will never be forgotten; she looked like one whose *heart,* as well as *eyes,* were closed upon the world.

Some time afterwards she wrote in her diary, "In my first setting out on my heavenly journey, I was kept in the golden path: I little thought what hard conflicts I should have with my wicked heart and the temptations of Satan, that busy enemy of my soul. I fear lest I should grieve my dear Redeemer, but I will pray to the Lord for grace to withstand all the temptations of the adversary."

Her sufferings were more severe than language can describe; but she says, "Though the Lord hath allotted me a thorny path, he gives me strength equal to my day; therefore will I rejoice in my affliction. Sometimes, when I have been in company with the people of God, I have longed to tell them what God has done for my soul, but Satan has silenced me; he suggests that I have been speaking peace to my soul, and tells me it is all a delusion. Constantly should I strive against this enemy, lest he should get my *soul* into prison, then *all* would be *dark.*"

After three years' endurance of most acute pain in her knee, a suppuration took place, followed by mortification, which brought this poor girl apparently to the brink of the grave. Caustics were applied daily, and it was thought nature could not support the abundant discharge. In speaking of this memorable period, she says, "I then felt a little of the sting of death, and stood shivering on the brink; yet I could rejoice under all my affliction, because the Lord Jesus was precious to my soul, and I was enabled to cast my burden upon him."

About ten months after this period she had a similar

attack in the other knee, which threatened the same progress of disease, and of as long continuance. It was suggested by her medical attendant, that amputation would be the most probable means of continuing her life: she listened with humble desire to know the will of God, and was able to look to the painful operation even with comfort; for she says, "The Lord strengthened me, and made me feel his strength in my weakness." On the day she was removed to the hospital, she says, "I felt myself happy; it did not belong to me to murmur, since the Lord had laid it upon me. He has said, 'Fear not, for I am with thee; I will sustain thee.' I left all in my Lord's hands. The world was then nothing to me; and when carried into the surgical room, I felt no wish either to live or die. The Lord carried me through, and supported me under the operation in a wonderful manner." On this painful occasion not a groan escaped her lips—scarcely a sigh; and when the operators whispered, "She does not feel," she calmly replied, "I *feel*, but I have supports you know nothing of."

A young student in the hospital saw and was deeply affected by her great serenity; he afterwards took every opportunity of visiting her bedside while she remained there. She felt great interest in him, and prayed earnestly that God would give him that light which he needed, to show him who made *her* to differ, and wherein that difference consisted. She said she "never felt her heart so much engaged in prayer for another." And what encouragement is there to fervent prayer. The young man died before her, but left a testimony of the blessed effects of this blind girl's conversation and example, to which he owed, under the blessing of God, *his salvation.*

The following extract from Betsey's diary, is almost the last written by her own hand. Subsequently to this, in consequence of losing the use of her right arm after six years' painful illness, she engaged some kind friend as her amanuensis. "I have not known what it is to be one day free from pain, but I can praise my blessed Lord for all my pain. 'All things work together for good to them that love

God.' I trust he has given me to love him. Therefore I trust all things will work together for my good and his glory. I have lost my sight, lost one of my legs and the use of the other, and am in great pain by night and day; weak in body, and given over by the physicians; yet all is for my good. I wish to lie passive in the Lord's hands, and know no will but his. I want to lose my wicked heart, and to depart and be for ever with the Lord; but his time is the best time. I find that the temptations of Satan and my own wicked heart sometimes threaten to overcome me. I have many doubts and fears. I am the vilest of the vile, and can cry out with the publican, 'Lord, be merciful to me a sinner.' Yet I hope, through the blood of Jesus, I shall at last breathe my soul into his bosom, and, dying, clasp him in my arms, the antidote of death."

She was, however, continued nine years longer in this world of suffering, in mercy to many souls, who *date the commencement of their religious course to her bright example* of patient endurance, nay, even joyful reception of her Father's rod; while many, very many, have had their faith and love strengthened by communion with this afflicted child of God.

In the ninth year of her protracted illness she says, "I have lately been brought through a very painful operation in the taking out of my right eye, and the Lord is in infinite loving-kindness heating the furnace still hotter. My knee is in a very dangerous state, and I am again ordered to the hospital. What the Lord is about to do with me I know not, but my times are in his hands; he is a present help in every time of need, and a stronghold in the day of trouble. Christ the Rock is my refuge in every storm of affliction; my shield, my hiding-place in every temptation; my strength, my strong hold, my high tower, my defence, when the billows roll around. Jesus, the good Pilot, in his own time, will conduct the little bark safe into the heavenly port, and not a wave of trouble shall again cross my peaceful breast; there I shall praise Jesus without interruption, and join with all the heavenly host to sing the wonders of his love. While

I am in this body of sin and death, my treacherous heart and the great enemy of souls interrupt me in my best services, and I cast many a wishful eye and longing heart to the heavenly Canaan, to see my dear Redeemer, and drop this clog of clay."

At another time she remarks, "I find the promises to be my meat and drink, my comfort in every trial; upon them I can *rest*, and feel steady reliance upon the Lord Jesus, though I am the vilest of the vile.

"I thought to have joined the triumphant song before this time, but I am still called to experience wearisome nights and days; a few months ago I expected I was just about to enter the heavenly harbor. In the nearest view of eternity, my soul was fixed upon Jesus, the Rock of ages; I looked for death as for a chariot to convey me to glory, to occupy my heavenly mansion, to see my dear Saviour in his full beauty, and to have done with sin and every care; but the Lord in infinite wisdom keeps me a little longer in this vale of tears. His ways are hidden in the deep, and past finding out; but he governs the armies of heaven and of earth by the counsel of his own will. The Lord has taken the use of my limbs, one after another: let him take what he pleases. I will praise his name."

Truly did she realize the fulfilment of the promise, "As thy days, so shall thy strength be," which such passages as the following will prove. "I find, daily, fresh supplies of bodily pain; but, blessed be the name of the Lord, I find him a present help, and I can leave myself in his hands, to do as seemeth him good. I am still called to endure much pain, but my Father, who afflicts me with one hand, upholds me with the other. I have for some time been kept in a humble, steady reliance upon the Lord Jesus. I find the *prospect* of heaven a heaven worth suffering for; and surely the *possession* of heaven is a heaven worth waiting for: yet a little time, and he will come, and will not tarry. I shall see my soul's delight in his full beauty; yet I trust I can say, 'all the days of my appointed time will I wait till my change come.'

"I am daily waiting till the Lord shall please to stretch out his almighty hand, and break the vital string, which I believe shall be my unspeakable gain. 'Though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil.' I trust he will make the waters of Jordan shallow, and give me an abundant entrance into the joy of my Lord.

"Though my bodily pain daily increases, yet I find my Jesus is strength in weakness, light in darkness, and his smiles sweeten every cross. My life is as a stormy winter, one tempest following another makes the cottage shake; the winter of my life will pass away, and my eternal summer soon dawn. The breaches cheerfully foretell this tabernacle must soon fall. I rejoice to feel it dissolving, for I have 'a building of God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens.' My heavenly Father entwines the string of love around the rod with which he afflicts me. The heavier the rod falls, the more stripes of joy come with it. I know that all will work the peaceable fruits of righteousness."

In the midst of this delightful assurance, she was kept humble, and often mourned over the corruption of her treacherous heart. She said, "Sin is more and more my burden; I abhor myself in dust and ashes, and admire the rich free grace that plucked me from the jaws of hell. It is all of grace. I must sing the highest notes of praise to Him who hath washed me in his own blood. I am lost in wonder at the love of God to wretched me."

She was alive to the best interests of her friends, and would most affectionately express that interest, always directing them to the inexhaustible fulness treasured up in Jesus Christ.

A Christian who frequently visited her, remarks, that on inquiring after her health, Betsey would often reply, "I am on the brink of the river, waiting for some kind angel to take me to possess my glorious inheritance. I am like a castle built upon a rock, the waves may beat against it, but cannot reach its top. I neither fear men nor devils; I shall soon be where the wicked cease from troubling."

And to the same friend, in her last illness, she said, "I

feel so serene in my soul, such confidence in the God of my salvation, that I think this will be the last conflict. It is as though I walked not by faith *now*, but by sight; that promise I can more fully comprehend than I ever did, 'They that trust in the Lord shall be as Mount Zion, which cannot be removed, but abideth for ever.'"

At another time she said, "I am quite resigned to my Father's will. I would willingly stay, if I might be made useful only to one soul."

After expressing to this friend the great increase of pain which she endured, she said, "But I cannot tell you what I have felt in my soul, or what glorious views I have had, by faith, of a crucified Redeemer. I have viewed him in the garden of Gethsemane, sweating great drops of blood. By faith I view him on the cross, his open side, his crown of thorns." When in the agonies of death, and expecting that she was entering the valley, she exclaimed with good old Simeon, "Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace. Come, Lord Jesus, come quickly." And towards morning she said, "The Master calleth, and my lamp is trimmed. I am quite ready."

On the Sabbath morning before her death, when her friend entered the room, she exclaimed with a loud voice, "Happy, happy, happy. Precious Jesus. I see him face to face. I have glory in my soul. Can you hear? My Jesus is precious. I have seen thousands of angels around the throne. Glory, glory!" This was her repeated theme from Saturday night, eleven o'clock, until Monday morning at one. She then took a little rest, and the last words she was heard to say, were those which she had so often sounded in the ears of her friends, "JESUS IS PRECIOUS."

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"I AM AN INFIDEL!"

AN AUTHENTIC NARRATIVE.

HENRY, the subject of the following strictly authentic narrative, possessed from childhood an active and enterprising mind. In his early youth he perceived that the self-denying precepts of the Gospel forbade his pursuing that course which had been marked out for him by an unchastened ambition. To get rid of this embarrassment, he had recourse to the doctrine of UNIVERSAL SALVATION; but being convinced, upon a careful examination, that the Bible furnished no support to his new religion, he rejected the unaccommodating book as a system of *priestcraft*, and adopted the sentiments of David Hume.

Henry was of an amiable temper; and though he had got rid of the restraints imposed by a belief in revelation, and wholly neglected the institutions of Christianity, he still retained, to a considerable extent, that outward morality which forms one of the distinct folds in the accustomed drapery of the Christian religion.

In 1826 he had nearly finished his preparation for the bar, and had gone to reside in the family of a pious lady in

the village of ——, whose husband was absent from home. Though there was a powerful revival of religion in that place, Henry had kept himself aloof from what he considered a foolish and needless excitement. On the 6th of December he was induced, by a sense of politeness, to accompany the lady with whom he boarded and a female friend of hers, residing in the family, to an evening lecture. He went to this meeting, as he afterwards acknowledged, with a full determination of keeping his mind engrossed with worldly thoughts; and he succeeded so well, that, on his return home, he had no distinct recollection of what had been advanced by the preacher.

After supper, the ladies whom he had accompanied to the house of God, left him in the sitting-room, and retired to a closet in a distant part of the house, to spend a short season in prayer for the salvation of their careless boarder. They had not been long engaged in pleading at the throne of grace, when they were interrupted by a loud cry of distress from the sitting-room. On repairing thither, they found the family Bible open upon the table, and the late thoughtless Henry standing upon his feet, with strong marks of distress upon his countenance. To the question, What is the matter? he answered, "I cannot tell, but I entreat you to pray for me!" This answer had scarcely passed his lips, when his heaving bosom gave vent to its accumulating anguish in heart-rending expressions of despair, which his agitated frame seemed scarcely capable of sustaining. Henry now saw plainly that his Universalism and infidelity were alike refuges of lies, under which he had taken shelter to screen himself from the reproaches of a guilty conscience, and believed that God was driving him from them by the power of his Spirit, not for the sake of having mercy, but to make him a monument of his righteous displeasure, and hold him up as a warning to those who should afterwards live ungodly.

About twelve o'clock at night he requested that some of his companions might be sent for, that they, seeing his anguish, might avoid the hopeless abyss into which he conceived himself to have fallen. At two in the morning the writer was called from his bed to visit him. Upon entering the apartment I found him upon his knees, not indeed attempting to pray, but giving vent to the anguish of a

broken spirit. I inquired of him about the state of his mind, but only received for answer, "I AM AN INFIDEL—*I have denied the only Saviour, and am now given up of* GOD *to eat the fruit of my own doings!*" His whole soul was immersed in agony, while the shiverings of a strange unearthly horror, which ran through his manly frame, had so prostrated his muscular powers that he was unable to stand, or even sit up without support. After giving him some instruction from the word of God, and praying for him, I left him under the care of some judicious Christian friends.

The next day was a Thanksgiving season through the state, and though it was a season of great gratitude in ——, it was also a season of deep distress with many, and of much agonizing prayer among the people of God. In the evening there was a meeting of religious inquiry, to which the despairing Henry, by the assistance of two friends, repaired. Here I again endeavored to lead him to the Saviour of sinners; but to every overture of mercy he would reply, "*These provisions were once for me, but I have rejected them. I have sinned away my day of grace*—I AM AN INFIDEL!" In this state of mind he left the meeting, and continued to tremble under "*a fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation*" *from the presence of the Almighty*, until about eleven o'clock that evening, when his obdurate heart was broken BY THE SPIRIT OF THE LORD, and the heart-rending groans of the convicted *infidel* were exchanged for the joyful song of the believing saint.

Henry's transition from the bitterness of a broken spirit to joy and peace in believing, was sudden; but his joy, like the light which is shed upon the path of the just, was abiding, and will, we have reason to hope, grow stronger and stronger till the perfect day.

If Henry's case may be considered a fair specimen of the effects of infidelity upon a mind enlightened by the Spirit of God here, where there is still room for repentance, what will be the condition of the infidel when eternity shall disclose all its awful realities to his view?

The freethinker often seems to consider his scepticism as a justification for all that he does amiss. As he resorts to this system to get rid of the strictness of the law of God, he endeavors to avail himself of the license given him by his adopted creed to quiet his conscience. When Christian

friends would have him attend a preached Gospel, it is to him a satisfactory reply, "I AM AN INFIDEL!" When entreated to break off from some immoral habit, his reply is, "I AM AN INFIDEL!" And when we would set before him the injury he is doing to the rising generation by withdrawing our youth from under the restraints of the Gospel, he meets us with the same self-satisfying justification, and gravely tells us that he is "AN INFIDEL!" But what if his consoling doctrine should not prove true? What if the Bible, after all, should be the word of God, as the Holy Spirit taught Henry to believe? Will his having rejected the way of life then save him? Infidelity can neither deliver from the guilt of sin, nor from the penalty of a righteous law. It may, indeed, blind the eyes for a time, and enable the sinner to walk with a firmer step in the downward road. But this blindness must all pass away. If the Spirit of God does not remove it in this world, it will be dispelled by the light of his countenance in the world to come.

It is easy for men, while immersed in the bustle of business, or running the giddy round of fashionable amusements, or listening to the pleasant song, to forget God, and put far off the evil day. It is easy for them, while sitting at a full board and joining in the pleasantries of the convivial circle, to silence the small voice of conscience by the recollection that they are INFIDELS. But the bustle of business, and the giddy round of fashionable amusements, must be laid aside; the song of pleasure must pass away; the full board and convivial circle must depart. Death's awful bereavements must break up the dearest relationships of life: the largest possessions must be reduced to the limits of the *narrow house;* and even the repose of the grave must be broken by the noise of the heavens and the earth passing away!

Then, impenitent sinner, what will you do? When the clarion of the Gospel shall be exchanged for the trumpet of the archangel, and the sceptre of mercy for the sword of justice; when you shall stand upon a dissolving world, in the presence of a righteous God; when the history of your life shall be unfolded, the book of God's law opened, and the offers of mercy rolled up and laid aside, will you be able to silence the reproaches of an awakened conscience, or still the throbbings of an aching heart, by exclaiming, "I AM AN INFIDEL?"

No. 268.

TO

THE CONFIDENT, THE DIFFIDENT,

AND

THE CARELESS.

It is probable that every reader is included in one of these three classes, or at least may find something suitable to himself in these hints: he will be able to judge of this when he has seriously read the whole.

TO THE CONFIDENT.

To such I would say, I have no objection to confidence. The Bible speaks of it as the believer's privilege. I have no objection to its rising to assurance, to full assurance; to its even assuming this form at the very outset, and maintaining it to the end of the course; inasmuch as it is the gracious design of God that his people should know that they have eternal life. And the case is quite conceivable, of so clear and simple a perception, and so strong and steadfast a belief of the freeness and fulness of the grace of God in Christ being obtained from the very first, and continued ever afterward, as shall keep the believer in the scriptural enjoyment of unshaken confidence to the last. Nay, more; whatever there may be in believers themselves to hinder its being uniformly realized, there is not only nothing in the word of God to prevent it, but every thing to warrant and produce it. It is not the fault of God, or of his Gospel, that it is not always thus. It is not that we are straitened in him, but in ourselves. It will be well for the confident, however, to attend to the three following simple inquiries.

1. Are you sure your confidence is *resting on the true foundation*—on the genuine apostolic Gospel—the simple testimony of God concerning his Son; on the finished work of Jesus, held forth in that testimony as the divinely approved, and therefore only ground of acceptance for sinners? Many, you must be well aware, have had confidence in error. See, then, that your foundation be right. This is the first concern. If this be wrong, all is wrong. Examine well the divine record, which reveals the ground of hope with all simplicity, requiring only sincerity on the sinner's part to understand it; and see that your confidence be founded in THE TRUTH. Then, supposing your conceptions of the Gospel to be according to the simplicity of apostolic statement, let me ask you,

2. Is your confidence *humble?* You may fancy it hardly necessary to ask such a question, after you have said that your confidence rests exclusively on the finished work of the Just One. Be it so. All I wish you to remember is, that if it really do rest there, it *will* be humble; and that the humble-minded character of your confidence is one of the evidences that this is indeed its foundation. There is such a thing as men's humbling themselves in words, with a conscious self-elation at their humbling themselves so well; professing to trust exclusively in the righteousness of Christ, but secretly, and unavowedly to themselves, confiding for salvation in their very zeal for the exclusion of their own righteousness; in one word, "trusting in themselves that they are righteous, and despising others." Those who have been taught by the grace of God to build their hopes on the work of Christ alone, need to be on their guard against the encroachment of such a spirit. If the confidence they enjoy be genuine, they will, I repeat, hold it *humbly;* with a deep and self-abasing consciousness that they owe their simple and cheering views of the Gospel not to themselves but to the Spirit of God, that they are debtors for every thing to sovereign mercy; and with a melting tenderness of compassion and of prayer for all who are building on any other

foundation, or who may "go mourning without the sun." I ask,

3. Is your confidence a *holy* confidence? I mean, is it a confidence in union with practical religion? Is it associated with "denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, and living soberly, righteously, and godly;" with "cleansing yourself from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, and perfecting holiness in the fear of God?" If it be not—if it be connected with sin and worldliness, with conformity to the world—if not in the open indulgence of vice, yet in its vanities and follies, its gayeties and thoughtless pleasures—as if you thought religion, instead of consisting in the spiritual and holy influence of those divine truths of which the faith is intended "to deliver you from this present evil world," lay in the mere holding of a speculative opinion, the adoption of which brought with it the privilege of worldly indulgence—if such be the character of your confidence, such its earthly and secular associations and tendencies, you may call it by the scriptural designation of "the assurance of faith," but I say again, it is the assurance of presumption. The whole word of God disowns it. It is not a plant of grace, but a weed of corruption. It is not from heaven, but from hell; not from the Spirit of light, but from the prince of darkness. Jesus "gave himself for our sins, that he might deliver us from this present evil world, according to the will of God and our Father"—"gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works."

TO THE DIFFIDENT.

To such I would say, let it be well considered, whence your want of confidence arises. So far from blaming diffidence, when considered as meaning self-distrust or self-jealousy, I would apply to it the words of Solomon, "Blessed is the man that feareth alway." But there is a desponding diffidence, which wonders at the cheerful confidence of others, while it is itself the offspring of obscure

conceptions, or unbelieving suspicions of the freeness and fulness of gospel grace. You may be looking too much to yourself, and too little to Christ. Let me remind you that the Gospel is the "Gospel of peace;" that it is "good tidings of great joy;" and that the communication of peace and joy must therefore be one of the very purposes of its proclamation to sinners. There is no presumption in a sinner's joy, when he "rejoices in Christ Jesus, having no confidence in the flesh," when he "joys in God, through Jesus Christ, by whom he has received the reconciliation." The possession of such peace and joy is no more than the fulfilment of the very end of God in the mission and work of his Son. And how is it to be retained? I answer, by steadfast "looking unto Jesus." This is the only legitimate, and it is, in the nature of things, the only reasonable way to find and to keep it. When the mariner is overtaken by the perilous tempest, what imparts to his mind confidence and tranquillity? Does he look forth at the fury of the raging storm, and, in order to enjoy peace and a sense of security, set himself to examine the state of his own feelings about it? No. He examines the tightness of his vessel, the firmness of its timbers, the completeness of its tackling, and its sea-worthy structure: he calls to mind the storms it has already weathered, the fearful seas which it has come through in safety. Thus should we do. We must find our peace, and security, and joy, in surveying the sufficiency of the foundation on which our hopes are built—not shifting sand, but solid rock—the foundation of which Jehovah himself hath said, "Behold, I lay in Zion, for a foundation, a stone, a tried stone, a precious corner-stone, a sure foundation; and he that believeth on him shall not be ashamed."

You will tell me, perhaps, that your affections are not as they ought to be: they are so cold, so dead, so inadequate to the extent of your obligations and the merits and claims of their object, and altogether you are conscious of such failures, that—how *can* you have peace? To such I would say, with all affection,

1. Remember, that the exercise of your affections towards Christ is *not to be your justifying righteousness;* no, nor any part of it. It is not to be, in any degree whatever, the ground of your hope towards God. It is He who is the *object* of your faith and love, that constitutes that ground, even Christ himself, in his perfect righteousness and atoning blood. See, then, that you keep these things distinct; for many have, perhaps unconsciously, confounded them, and, by confounding them, have been "led into darkness, and not into light."

2. Although love to Christ is the effect and evidence of faith, so that there is no faith where there is no love, I hope you never will come to think of yourself, that you love him *sufficiently*—with a love at all adequate to his deserts, or to your own obligations; for while you live on earth, this will never be true: and even in heaven itself, although your heart shall be as full of love as it can hold, yet, when measured by the worthiness of its object, even such love will ever be far beneath it; for this worthiness is infinite, and the love which would be a suitable return for it would require to be exercised by an infinite mind: a created soul, however enlarged, and however holy, can never contain it. I trust, moreover, that you will never cease to fear lest your love should cool, exposed as it is, in this world, to so many chilling influences. The very fear of not loving arises from love, and from an impression of the high claims of its object; and this description of self-jealousy is included in the saying before cited, "Blessed is the man that feareth alway."

3. How is it that the affections are to be excited, and maintained in lively exercise, towards their objects? How are they elevated and invigorated towards an earthly object? Is it by sitting down to muse how you have felt in former times, or how you are feeling now? No: it is by thinking of your friend; by recollecting in your own mind, and recounting to others, his various excellences, every thing in him and about him, that is fitted to attract, and fix, and

strengthen attachment. So should it be in regard to your heavenly Friend. It is not by brooding over the state of your own mind and heart that your love to him is to be confirmed and animated: it is by "looking unto Jesus," by thinking of him, reading of him, speaking of him, praising him; by dwelling on *his* love to *you*, rather than on *yours* to *him;* and above all, let me say, by actively serving him, in all the duties of life. Your great error lies in making happy frames and feelings too much your *object* or *aim*. But "I am well persuaded that, speaking generally, they will be found to enjoy such frames most habitually, who think least about them. The true way to the possession of them is, not setting them up before us as the object to which our endeavors are to be directed, but living a life of operative faith upon the Son of God, resting with firmness and simplicity on his finished work, and under the influence of humble gratitude and love to his name, constantly and diligently doing his will, and promoting his glory." Follow this course, and "the joy of the Lord will be your strength."

4. All our self-inquiry, if conducted on right principles, will *lead us to Jesus*. When you bring yourself to the test of God's law, and perceive and feel that, when tried by that standard, there is nothing for you but despair, what should be the effect but to "shut you up" the more to him, as your only refuge and your only hope? And when you try yourself by the Bible description of the Christian character, and are still conscious—as who is not?—of sad and multiplied deficiencies, let this operate in two ways: let it deepen still more your humble impression of your need of his propitiatory blood and abounding mercy; convincing you that even the character of the renewed nature, in any stage of its advancement, will never do for you to stand in before God: and let it impart to your mind a still livelier sense of the value of his name, as your plea at the throne of grace, for that divine influence which is needful, to enlighten what is dark, to supply what is wanting, to correct

what is erroneous, to purify what is corrupt, to spiritualize what is earthly, to elevate what is depressed, to invigorate what is weak, to confirm what is unstable, to keep you from temptation, and to deliver you from evil. And as to your experience, what is the use you should make of it? Are you to trust in it? No; but only to draw from it encouragement to return to the source from which it was derived. If it was legitimate and scriptural, that source was Christ. The Holy Spirit makes CHRIST the spring of all that he acknowledges as Christian experience; and then, keeping the believing soul still to one point, makes that experience the attraction back to Christ.

TO THE CARELESS.

Some may read this Tract who are *careless* about their own interest in the important matters of salvation and eternal life. I call them important. Who will dispute it? Their importance is unutterable. Yet, while every sound judgment assents to this, alas, with what listlessness they are generally regarded! Men hear, and sometimes read, discussions about eternal life, as if it were a matter in which they had no personal concern. But let me beseech you, with affectionate solicitude, to recollect the solemn fact, a fact which you can neither gainsay nor alter, that you *are* in possession of an existence that is never to end; and that the present life is the time for settling the question whether this eternal existence is to be to you an eternity of happiness or of woe. The very *possibility* of this alternative depending on your present transitory life, should make you serious and in earnest. Yet, are you not attending to and settling, every day, questions of this world's personal, domestic, commercial, and political economy, while you are leaving uninvestigated and undecided inquiries relative to that never-ending state on which every instant you know not but you may enter? To-morrow itself, on which you are reckoning as a part of your present life, may to you be a part not of time but of eternity—a fixed and immutable

eternity. Are you, then, acting wisely; are you acting consistently with that *reason*, which is your boasted distinction from the brute creation?

Yet, while living thus, you may be professing to believe the Bible to be God's word. But if you really knew and believed the contents of this divine record, you could not remain as you are, careless about the eternal results which it brings before you, and of which it assures you with such equal fidelity of denunciation and promise. The question, who have and who have not eternal life, is a question decided in this book with the most unwavering explicitness. There is no uncertainty left hanging over it: "He that hath the Son, hath life; and he that hath not the Son of God, hath not life." "The Father loveth the Son, and hath given all things into his hand. He that believeth on the Son, hath everlasting life; he that believeth not the Son, shall not see life, but the wrath of God abideth on him." "Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God." These declarations stand on record in this book. You cannot be wise in treating them with lightness, till you have carefully examined and deliberately set aside, as proved to be futile, all the evidence of its divine original. They are interesting to all: they are interesting to you. Bring the question, the all-important question, home, HAVE I ETERNAL LIFE? That you should *have* this life, is to you of infinite and everlasting moment: that you should *know* that you have it, is essential to your highest happiness in time, as is its possession to your blessedness in eternity. May God in mercy lead you to both the possession and the knowledge, by leading you to Christ.

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No. 269.

SHALL I COME

TO

THE LORD'S SUPPER?

My dear Brother—According to your request I will endeavor, with all plainness, to answer the interesting inquiry you proposed to me. "A pious young person," you inform me, "hesitates about coming to the Lord's supper: how," you ask, "is he to be convinced that it is his duty and privilege to sit down at the Lord's table?"

Before proceeding to the subject you have laid before me, it is proper that I tell you in what sense I understand certain words you employ; because if we disagree in these, it is not likely that what I shall say will prove satisfactory to you.

In the first place, then, when you call this person "*pious,*" I suppose you mean, not merely that he is thoughtful, or seriously reflecting, or moral in the ordinary sense of the term, or even a professor of religion, but that he is one whose heart you have reason, in the judgment of charity, to believe has been changed by the grace of God.

Again, you speak of communing as the "*duty*" of your friend; and by this I presume you mean, it is an obligation *immediately pressing* upon him. In a very important sense, indeed, it is the duty of all to whom the Gospel message is come, to partake of the holy supper, and no such person can decline this without incurring great guilt. But if he come otherwise than God has commanded, he offends. So awful is the condition of such a person! If he partakes, he sins—if he does not, he sins. What, then, must he do? There is but one way of safety for him. Let him immediately "flee for refuge to lay hold upon the hope set before him" in the Gospel. Let him repent and believe, and come to the table of the Lord. All these are alike duties, and

to neglect either is to violate a divine command. But they are to be done in the Gospel order; REPENT AND BELIEVE, *and being baptized, commemorate the dying love of the Redeemer.*

I. With this explanation before us, I will now endeavor to remove the doubts of your friend. And it seems to me, these will in a great measure be dissipated by a bare consideration of the nature of the ordinance. The Lord's supper is spiritual food, designed to sustain and invigorate spiritual life, even as the symbols of bread and wine therein used, nourish and strengthen the body. Such, we believe, is the simple, scriptural character of this institution. Now, the question is, Who ought to sit down to this feast; the *friends*, or the *enemies* of the Lord Jesus? And when we mention these two classes of persons, we have enumerated all around us. For as it regards the cause of Christ, there is no such thing as neutrality: "they who are not for me," says he, "are against me." If we are not his friends, we must be his enemies. Which of these, then, are proper guests at the table of the Lord? This is a question, we conceive, that admits of a ready answer. Certainly, we should expect, at the supper of the Lord, to behold none but the friends of the Lord; and the absence of any of these ought to be as great a grief to us as the presence of his enemies.

II. But who are *the friends of Christ?* The merely good men of the world? No; "for that which is highly esteemed among men, is abomination in the sight of God." All those who assent to the truth of the Gospel? No; "the devils believe and tremble." All those who profess to be his friends? No; for many shall say, in the last day, "we have eaten and drunk in thy presence," to whom the Lord will declare, "I know you not—depart from me." Who, then, are his friends? We answer, *all who are not of the world.* The Son of God came to this earth to establish a holy kingdom on the foundation of his own "obedience unto death," and by the sanctifying influences of his Spirit. Here, then, there is about us a "world which lieth in wickedness," and there is the kingdom of Christ. Now, have we so repented and believed in the Saviour, as to have separated ourselves from the world? If so, then are we the willing subjects of Emmanuel's kingdom, and consequently,

his friends. There can be but two sorts of people: all who "are not of the Father, are of the world." "A friend of the world is the enemy of God."

III. There is another point of view in which this subject may be presented. "All are by nature dead in trespasses and sins," and therefore "walk according to the course of this world;" but some have, by divine grace, been made "alive unto God, through Jesus Christ our Lord," and these "walk in newness of life."

Now, as we would not give material food to a dead man—the very fact of his being dead would make this unreasonable and useless—so ought we not to give spiritual food to those who are "dead in trespasses and sins, who walk according to the course of this world." Not having been made "alive unto God, through Jesus Christ our Lord," the "bread of God" could not profit them. As, then, natural food is for living men, so spiritual food—the Lord Jesus fed on by faith, in his supper—is for living souls, those who have been quickened by the Spirit of God from the death of "trespasses and sins," and who therefore "walk with God." *But only penitent believers "walk with God;"* such, then, are they who have been made "alive unto God, through Jesus Christ our Lord." They are the children of God, through faith in Christ, and by the regenerating operation of his Spirit.

We have then arrived at the conclusion that all, without exception or limitation, *all who repent and believe, and are baptized, and only they, are fit subjects for the Lord's supper.* Such persons are the true friends of Jesus, and therefore have a place at his table; they are the children of God, being born of his Spirit, and consequently, theirs is the "children's bread."

IV. But here, perhaps, the inquirer may ask, "How may I know whether I am a penitent believer? I fear I have never felt that 'godly sorrow which worketh repentance unto salvation;' I fear I have never yet 'believed on the Lord Jesus Christ in my heart unto righteousness.'" Is it thus with thee, reader? Then put, we beseech thee, these few questions to thyself with earnest prayer for divine grace to enable thee to answer them aright.

1. Has the Spirit of God ever "convinced thee of sin," so as to make thee see a loathsome pollution in all thou art,

and all thou doest? It was this sense of personal depravity which caused the apostle to exclaim, "I know that in me, (that is, in my flesh,) dwelleth no good thing. O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?"

2. Has a heartfelt consciousness of guilt, corruption, and ruin, led thee to Him who was "lifted up, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have eternal life?"

3. While seeking the Lord in the way of his appointment, private prayer, searching the Scriptures, listening to a preached Gospel, the conversation and prayers of pious people—whilst thus seeking the Lord, has his "*secret*—the great mystery of godliness—Christ crucified," been in some degree revealed to thee, bringing light to thy mind, peace to thy conscience, and love to thy heart? yea, such light, and peace, and love, as have caused thee, perhaps, at times to "rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory?"

4. Do all things about thee—the men of the world, their character, and ways, and tendency, appear just as God's word describes them to be? Have you discovered that the Lord has a people here? And are these precious in your eyes? Do you esteem them the excellent of the earth? Do you prefer their fellowship and conversation? Are you willing to cast in your lot with them, "choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season?"

5. Do you "delight in the law of God after the inward man?" and is it your daily desire, and prayer, and endeavor, to "deny ungodliness and worldly lusts, and to live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present evil world?" And yet are you so sensible of your shortcomings, of the sins even of your most holy things, as to make "Christ crucified" your only hope?

6. Do you see in the salvation of the Gospel a method of redemption most glorious to the holy and merciful Sovereign of heaven, and admirably adapted to a world of sinners? Have you felt it to be exactly suited to your case?

Finally. Have you, at least, had any such sense of the things contained in the foregoing questions as has led you to *hate sin and love holiness*—and to wish that all around you might be brought to the same blessed experience?

Certainly, reader, if it be thus with thee, thou art a Christian indeed; thou hast "the Spirit of Christ." He who loves the law, and the ways, and the people of God, must love God himself. And be assured, none do thus love God but those who exercise "repentance towards God, and faith towards our Lord Jesus Christ."

O what mercy has the Lord then shown thee! Whilst multitudes about thee are going on in blindness and sin, thou hast been "turned from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God." How many are living "without Christ—having no hope, and without God in the world;" but "God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined into thy heart, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ!" Thou hast found "truth, the pearl of great price;" peace, hope, holiness, are thine; and there are seasons, perhaps, when thou canst rejoice in "the hope of glory."

And shall "the Father of mercies" have done so much for thee, and thy heart not burn within thee? Surely, gratitude must constrain thee to live no more to thyself, or to the world, but to "Him who loved thee and died for thee;" gratitude must constrain thee to cast the full weight of thy influence into the scale on the Lord's side. Surely, thy full heart is ready to burst out with a saint of old, "What shall I render unto the Lord for all his benefits towards me? *I will take the cup of salvation*, and call upon the name of the Lord. I will pay my vows unto the Lord now, *in the presence of all his people*."

V. Here, however, the serious inquirer may reply, "I trust that I truly repent of my sins, and believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and that it is the sincere purpose of my heart to serve and please God in all my ways; but I fear my repentance is *not deep enough*, my faith *not strong enough* for one who would sit down at the table of the Lord." Or he may say, "Even if my repentance and faith be of the most lively sort, still they have not yet sufficiently impressed my life; I am not so eminently pious as it seems to me a communicant ought to be."

Now, God forbid that we should say one word which might tend to diminish the longings of a pious heart after greater attainments in religion; but do not such fears as

those we have just described, proceed from mistaken views of this ordinance? It is designed for penitent believers, and not merely for those who have attained to a large measure of repentance and faith. Just as certain is it, that all who truly repent of their sins, and believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, however feeble those graces may be in them, ought to come to the Lord's supper, as it is that *all impenitent and unbelieving persons are unmeet guests.*

And in what part of the Bible do we find the acquisition of an extraordinary degree of holiness required in a believer before he make this memorial of a Saviour's dying love?

Either we are impenitent and unbelieving, or we do repent and believe; either we are worldly, or pious; either we are in an unconverted state, or our hearts have been changed by divine grace; either we are under the curse of a broken law, or we stand justified and accepted before God through faith in his Son; either we are righteous or wicked: in one word, either we are "without Christ," or "in him." In one or the other of these states we must be; there is no such a thing as a half-way character, or half-way condition. *O, there is an awful and indelible line* drawn in the word of truth between the whole of mankind! THE NEW BIRTH *is that line.* On the one side are "the children of this world," on the other "the children of God."

Now, if we are among the first class, then to come to the Lord's supper is solemn mockery of God, because we thereby profess ourselves to be what we really are not—his friends. But if we belong to the latter company, then, though we may be mere "babes in Christ," "less than the least of all saints," still, we are believers—we are the people of the Lord—we are "sanctified in Christ Jesus;" and, blessed be his name, he invites us, though "in weakness, and fear, and much trembling"—he invites us to draw nigh and feed upon the "true bread, which cometh down from heaven." And to refuse this invitation, is to proclaim ourselves what indeed we are not—the enemies of Christ.

VI. Sometimes, however, another fear may perplex the mind of the believer, and keep him back from the table of the Lord. He may complain, "I have not this or that Christian grace, and therefore dare not approach the holy communion."

To this we reply, Thou art mistaken, O man; and plainly "writest bitter things" against thyself. For as the worldly soul has not one "fruit of the Spirit," so every believer has them all in a greater or less degree. He may indeed be very deficient in some graces of the Spirit, yet he is not utterly destitute of any one of them. Hence, to say of the true believer, he is not penitent—or of the penitent, he has no humility—or of the humble-minded, he has no boldness in the Lord—or in general, to speak of the Christian as being devoid of any one grace, is a downright solecism in religion. Be assured, the "new creature in Christ" is a perfect man, though he may be feeble in many of his members. *If we really have one of the graces of the Spirit in any degree, we have them all,* though perhaps none eminently so. And it is just to nourish and invigorate the "new man" in the graces of the Spirit, that the Lord's supper was instituted. If, then, we feel humbly conscious of being weak in any particular grace, this, so far from keeping us back from the communion, ought to impel us forward. For it is at this ordinance, especially, we may hope to "grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ."

To sum up the whole in a few words: the Lord's supper is "spiritual food" to cherish and strengthen spiritual life; and the means whereby it is received is faith. Hence it was not provided exclusively for the strong in faith, but for all believers; it is bread, not merely for "fathers, and the young," but for "little children" in Christ. And as we ought not to admit him to the table of the Lord who gives not good evidence of being born again of the Spirit, so we dare not repel the feeblest Christian.

VII. Here, however, it may not be improper to notice what I believe to be a dangerous error, that has sometimes fallen in my way. It may be thus stated: A person who is not a penitent believer—who is not converted unto God—but who is anxious for his soul, and professes to be seeking the Lord—is advised to come to the communion, because it is means of grace. Is this right?

We answer decidedly, No. The Lord's supper is indeed a means of grace, but it is spiritual food, and to offer spiritual food to a dead soul is something worse than folly. He who has not been by divine grace "made alive unto

God through Jesus Christ our Lord," is "dead in trespasses and sins;" or, in other words, he who is not a Christian, is impenitent and unbelieving: I know of no middle character between these two. Let such a man, then, *repent and believe, or else come not to the table of the Lord.* Advise him to come to the Lord's supper? why, this is to counsel the man to make the hypocritical profession of a friendship he never felt. So sure as there is any meaning in the Gospel, *all impenitent and unbelieving persons are the enemies of the Lord Jesus Christ.*

VIII. One remark more, and I have done. It is a plain Scripture testimony, "If any man be in Christ, he is a new creature"—new in his dispositions, views, and objects—new in his spirit and conduct. Hence, what such a man once loved, he hates; and what he once hated, he loves. Now, it seems to me that a consideration of this Bible account of what a true believer in the Son of God is, will at once show us the inconsistency between the card-table, the ballroom, the theatre, the horserace, or any such amusement of the world, and a profession of religion. *A pious man would not desire these things; and he who can relish them gives fearful evidence that he is destitute of the Christian character.* Such a person may have "a name to live," but, alas, is he not dead—"dead in trespasses and sins?"

Your friend in the bonds of the Gospel, B. P. A.

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No. 270.

A TRAVELLER

AT

THE END OF HER JOURNEY.

BY REV. RICHARD KNILL,

OF ST. PETERSBURGH.

Miss P., the interesting traveller whose short history is here given, was a native of a rural village in the principality of Wales. There she spent the early part of her life, and little thought *then*, that she should visit other climes, and die in a foreign land. But so it came to pass, and in this way I became acquainted with her.

It was the unspeakable privilege of this young person to have a pious mother, whose godly life and scriptural instructions produced deep and tender feelings on her youthful mind. Her mother prayed *for* her, and *with* her, and regularly took her to the house of God. Happily for her, the preaching she attended was of the right kind, and deepened the impressions which were made at home. It was similar to that which the venerated Legh Richmond describes: "It is simple, earnest, scriptural, plain, and interesting. The awful condition of a sinner in his natural state, and the consolations and promises of a Saviour, are dwelt upon throughout their prayers and discourses." O, were the walls of every place of worship to echo with the sound of such truths, what a glorious transformation would it produce throughout Christendom, yea, throughout the world!

By these means her memory was well stored with hymns and portions of the Bible, and a grand outline of the way of salvation. Impressions thus made in early life are seldom *entirely* effaced. This I particularly noticed in the experience of my departed friend; and parents and preachers too may draw great encouragement from this thought, when

they are endeavoring to lead the minds of the young to the knowledge of Christ.

The first time I ever heard of Miss P. was on the 27th of May, 1831. Having accompanied a dear missionary brother to the grave of a departed saint, and been engaged with him in planning a school for a thickly populated neighborhood of poor children, as I returned home I found a note waiting for me, saying, "Miss P., one of your congregation, is very desirous to see you. She is exceedingly ill, and hopes you will come soon." The distance was five miles, and the next morning I walked over to her residence. I found her alone. Her countenance indicated that her continuance here would not be long. I said to her, A friend of yours has written me a note requesting me to call and see you, and I have come. "Thank you," she replied, "I am glad to see you; I hope you will be able to comfort me."

She was lying on her bed, neatly dressed, and a black velvet pelisse, trimmed with fur, was thrown loosely over her feet. The sight was very affecting. It seemed to say, "So will the black pall soon cover me, when I am laid in my coffin."

I sat down by her bedside and entered into conversation, trying at the same time to recollect if I had ever seen her before; but I could not trace the faintest recollection. Yet I thought I had seen the pelisse among my hearers at the chapel. I said to her, "Pray, miss, do you know me?"

"O yes," she replied, "I know you very well; I have seen you several times. Have you not seen me?"

I answered, "I think I have seen this pelisse, but I have no recollection of you."

The tears started in her eyes—"Yes," said she, "I wore this pelisse when I was at chapel: *it* is not altered, but *I* am greatly altered. My illness has reduced me to a shadow, but the distress of my soul outweighs all my bodily pains."

Just as she finished this sentence a lady entered the room. It was the amiable and benevolent friend to whom the house belonged, who I was happy to perceive was un-

remitting in her attentions to the dying sufferer. This lady immediately began about the distressing state of Miss P.'s mind. "I cannot account for it, sir," said she, "nor would you be able to account for it, if you knew her character—so kind, so religious, so affectionate, so obliging is she, that every body loves her. She is an angel! I assure you it is a fact."

"I have no reason to doubt your veracity, madam," I replied, "but I do think I can account for Miss P.'s distress. She wants something more than all you have mentioned in order to become happy." Then turning to Miss P., I said, "You hear what your benevolent friend has said respecting you, and we will not attempt to disprove it for a moment—but tell me, is all this which the lady has mentioned sufficient for you to rest upon, when you shall stand before the judgment-seat of Christ?"

"O no," she replied.

"And suppose that you could command all the excellences of all the good people in the world, would all this together be a sure foundation on which you could venture the salvation of your soul?"

"No," she again replied; "all this would be of no avail to me."

"Then your friend has mistaken your case. Pray, how do you think a sinner can be saved?"

"Ah," said she, "there is only *one* way, and that is not by works of righteousness which we have done, but through faith in the merits of our Lord Jesus Christ."

I rejoiced in this testimony from her dying lips. It gave me great encouragement to hope that her soul would not remain long in darkness, and it afforded me a fair opportunity for explaining to the lady what the Scriptures say respecting the "only name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved."

After this the lady read a chapter, and we engaged in prayer. I then pointed out several parts of the Bible which I wished to have read to Miss P., as her strength would bear it; and after a few other observations took my leave.

Never had I been received or treated with greater kindness.

It is scarcely possible to witness any thing more solemn or instructive than a death-bed scene. O how it discovers the vanity of all earthly things, when we behold a fellow-creature panting for life—struggling with death—crying for mercy—calling on the long-neglected Saviour, and saying, "O could I but obtain the assurance of his love, then would I shout, 'O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?'" On retiring from a scene like this, and considering how many there are who never think of their souls and eternity, who would not breathe out the prayer of the patriarch, "O that they were wise, that they understood this, that they would consider their latter end?" Such were frequently my impressions when returning from the dying bed of this young woman, and such, I trust, will be the impressions of many who read these lines.

The distance of my house, and other circumstances, would not permit me to renew my visits every day, but I soon endeavored to make a second call. On entering the room she looked at me with an anxious countenance, and said, "Ah, I have no peace—my soul can take no comfort—my burden is heavier than I can bear—I am greatly distressed."

I spoke of the Saviour.

"Yes," she replied, "it is very true—I know it all—but, my unbelief, this is my burden. I cannot take hold of the encouragement. I want to come to Christ, but cannot. O this hard, this wicked heart. Pray for me, I beseech you."

"I will attend to your request," I said; "but compose your mind. Tell me a little about your history. We are strangers to each other, and it is desirable that I should know something of the disease, in order to apply the remedy."

She then began and told me of her birthplace, and early religious impressions, and the advantages she had enjoyed, and added, "When I was young, my dear and pious mother died; my father had previously been taken from me, and when my parents were gone I was left to my own discretion. I had nothing of a worldly nature to detain me at home, and

knowing that I had relatives in this country, I resolved to be with them; and hither I came. Here I have received great kindness; indeed I have had every thing that earth could give; *but I have not been happy.* O no; I have not been happy. I knew too much of my Bible to be happy. I had heard and seen too much of religion to be happy. I felt the vanity of the world even when I was most occupied in it. I cut myself off from religious privileges, and it has made me miserable."

"How have you spent your time since you have been here?"

"I have been chiefly engaged in travelling, either in this or in neighboring countries."

"How have you spent your Sabbaths?"

No answer but a gush of tears.

"Have you frequently been to places of worship?"

"No. I have seldom been at a place where I could understand the *church* language; and since my return here I have been so completely occupied that I could only attend chapel about four times, and even when I was there it made me miserable. All that I heard seemed to be against me. The invitations and promises, as well as the threatenings, were as so many daggers in my breast; and once when the Lord's supper was administered in my presence, it was like a thunderbolt to me. I thought I should have fainted."

"Then the sum total of your history appears to be this: you were well instructed in divine things when at home, but since you have come hither you have slighted them; yet you had too much light to be happy while you were thus neglecting the great salvation. O 'what is a man profited, if he gain the whole world, and lose his own soul?'"

"Ah, yes," said she, "*that is it,* and now I am miserable."

I replied, "It would be strange if you were not miserable; but recollect it is a great mercy that your conscience is not seared as with a hot iron—that God has not said respecting you, '*Let her alone*'—that the Spirit, whom you have grieved, has not ceased to strive with you. Yes, I consider

it a great mercy that your mind is so much alive to the solemnity of your situation. You say you are miserable, and you know there is only one remedy for miserable sinners. Take that remedy. Embrace that Saviour. Flee to that refuge. Trust in the merits of that blood. Christ is the sinner's friend, and you have slighted him; but now, even now, turn to him, believe in him, and you shall be saved!"

A pause ensued. I left her to her own reflections. After a few minutes, which I could not doubt had been spent in meditation and prayer, I said to her, "Can you repeat any hymns which refer to the atonement of Christ?"

"Yes," she replied, "I can repeat many; I have just been teaching a beautiful one to Mary,"—a sweet little girl who sat by her side. She then began it:

"There is a fountain filled with blood,
Drawn from Emmanuel's veins;
And sinners, plunged beneath that flood,
Lose all their guilty stains.

The dying thief rejoiced to see
That fountain in his day;
And there would I, though vile as he,
Wash all my sins away."

At this her feelings overcame her, and she could proceed no farther.

After a few days I called again, and was happy to find her composed and tranquil; trusting in her Redeemer to order the event of her sickness in mercy, and committing to him the interests of her soul for eternity. "I hope," said she, "that I shall obtain mercy—that God will not cast me off—that the Saviour will not reject me."

"What leads you thus to hope? Is it because you think you are better than you were before?"

"No; I am not looking to myself, but to the word, the promise, and the oath of God, 'that we might have strong consolation who have fled for refuge to lay hold on the hope set before us, which hope we have as an anchor to the soul, both sure and steadfast.'"

This visit was to me both edifying and comforting. We

had much conversation, and that part which she took in it discovered the very interesting state of her mind.

Among other things, she said, in a most solemn manner, "I have been looking back on my life, and I am mortified, and ashamed, and humbled at the review. O what have I been doing! How have I wasted my precious time! I have been grasping at shadows! I have been feeding on husks! A deceived heart has turned me aside."

These words were spoken with much difficulty, in a low tone, and with long pauses between.

She added, "I have been thinking of others also. The world is in a dangerous condition. I see it *now*. Yes—sacred things are almost universally neglected. O could I but make my feeble voice heard, I would tell them all of their fearful condition. Will you, sir, warn them to flee from the wrath to come?"

I replied, "I will do what I can, but I am afraid we shall obtain only a partial hearing. Men are too much engrossed with worldly things. The chains of sin are too strong upon them. Sabbath occupations are too carnal, and sensual, and devilish. The 'god of this world' hath blinded the eyes and hardened the hearts of most men; and what makes it the more alarming, is the fact, that they have no apprehension of their danger. But let us do what we can; and above all, let us abound in prayer. Let us call down Omnipotence to our help—for God can change the hardest heart. Let us pray."

It gave me great delight to observe in Miss P. so much solicitude for the souls of her relatives; for I believe this is an unequivocal sign of a right frame of heart. Where this feeling is prevalent, and genuine, the happy possessor of it may assure himself that he has the mind of Christ. May every one who reads this have no peace, nor joy, nor satisfaction in any thing, until he experiences this true love to God and man.

More than four weeks had now passed since my first interview. A great change had passed on her countenance, and it was evident that the earthly house of her tabernacle

would soon be dissolved; but her intellect remained strong and clear, and a sweet calm gradually took possession of her breast. During the last day or two of her life she could not speak so as to be heard distinctly, but the third day before her spirit took its flight, she said to her friend, "I am going—the struggle will soon be over: I am happy—I am happy;" and on the day six weeks after I first saw her, she was carried to her grave.

Standing, as it were, by her side once more, I would close this history with a word of advice to *those who attend the sick and dying.* The greatest proof of love to your afflicted friends is, to act towards them with *Christian fidelity.* That is a false tenderness which would lead a *saint* or a *sinner* to attempt to draw comfort from a blameless moral life; and, alas, it is a bad sign that any should wish to administer such poor consolation. It is but too plain that their own views, both of sin and salvation, are very defective. Mr. Cecil mentions a case of this kind. He had been conversing with an afflicted man about the evils of his conduct, when his wife interrupted Mr. Cecil, by assuring him that her husband had been an excellent man. "Silence," said the dying penitent, "it is all true!"

Something not unlike this took place at the dying bed of Miss P. Her friend and benefactress praised her, and wondered how one who had lived as she had done could now be distressed—but it would not do. A wounded spirit—a conscience burdened with guilt—rejects all such support! O ye that stand around the dying bed, do not flatter. I must have a Saviour, or I am lost—a Redeemer, or I perish. Take away every false prop—break down every refuge of lies—strip the sinner of every self-righteous plea, and then pour in spiritual consolation.

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PRAYER.

BY THE REV. SETH WILLISTON.

The above title suggests a duty which ought to precede the reading of this paper. Pause, reader, pause and pray—pray for the blessing of God on this Tract. Without his blessing, it will promote the spirit of prayer neither in yourself nor others.

A due examination of this duty will lead us to consider its *obligation*, its *nature*, its *benefits*, and the proper *occasions* for its performance.

I. OBLIGATION TO PRAYER.

The Scriptures clearly inculcate the duty of prayer.

1. By *precept*. Of the repeated injunctions of the Old Testament, I shall introduce but this one: "Thus saith the Lord God, I will yet for this be inquired of by the house of Israel, to do it for them." Ezek. 36 : 37. God here expresses his purpose to bestow the blessings of his grace only in answer to the supplications of his people. The New Testament abounds with precepts requiring the performance of this duty. Christ urged it with great frequency and earnestness. He said, "Ask—seek—knock—watch and pray." "He spake a parable to this end, that men ought always to pray, and not to faint." Luke 11 : 9; 18 : 1; Matt. 26 : 41. Paul, Peter, James, John, and Jude, who were employed by the Holy Ghost to write all the inspired epistles, did not one of them fail to inculcate the duty in question. Rom. 12 : 12; Ephes. 6 : 18; Phil. 4 : 6; Col. 4 : 2; 1 Thess. 5 : 17; 1 Pet. 4 : 7; James 5 : 16; 1 John, 5 : 14–16; Jude, verse 20.

2. By *example*. Those who lived before the flood called on the name of the Lord. Gen. 4 : 26. Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, are all described as men of prayer. Gen. 18 : 23–33 ; 24 : 63 ; 32 : 9–32. Those illustrious decendants of theirs, whose names adorn the pages of sacred history—statesmen and monarchs, as well as priests and prophets—are all represented as men who had communion with God. What reader of the Old Testament history is ignorant of the fact, that a spirit of devotion marked the character of such men as Moses, Joshua, Samuel, David, Asa, Jehoshaphat, Hezekiah, Elijah, Ezra, Nehemiah, and Daniel ; and of such women as Hannah, Deborah, and Esther ?

The worthies of the New Testament, both male and female, are described as persons who conscientiously regarded this duty. We know this was the case with Christ himself. He prayed much. To engage in this duty, he arose early and sat up late : he was known to continue all night in prayer to God. Mark 1 : 35 ; 6 : 46, 47 ; Luke 6 : 12.

3. The Scriptures inculcate this duty as *universal*. "I will," said one who spake as he was moved by the Holy Ghost, "that men pray everywhere." As we can never remove from under the dominion of the Most High, nor cease to need his merciful protection, we can never be freed either from the obligation or necessity of prayer. Daniel, residing at Babylon, the seat of a pagan empire, felt both. Nehemiah prayed at Shushan, as well as at Jerusalem ; Jonah, in the whale's belly ; and Paul and Silas, in the prison. This duty extends its claims to all classes of society—to men in secular life as well as those in the holy ministry ; to rulers as well as private citizens ; to the rich as well as the poor. None are so exalted as to be above, nor so depressed as to be below, either the obligation or privilege of prayer. The servant of Abraham prayed to the same God to which

his master prayed, and was equally accepted. From the claims of this duty no age nor condition in life is exempt. "Both young men and maidens, old men and children, let them praise the name of the Lord." The little child as well as the aged man, should kneel before the Lord his Maker. Psalm 148 : 12, 13 ; 1 Samuel, 1 : 28 ; Luke 2 : 49, 52.

4. The Scriptures represent this duty as *essential to Christian character*. "Just and devout"—"giving alms unto the people, and praying to God always," are joined together to constitute the character of the good man. Luke 2 : 25 ; Acts 10 : 2. None are considered as giving more certain indications of a wicked heart than those who say, "What is the Almighty, that we should serve him? and what profit shall we have, if we pray unto him?" Job 21 : 15. An immoral life is not a surer index of an unsanctified heart, than a life without prayer. Nor is it any more certain, that a renovation of heart will transform the immoral into a moral man, than that it will convert the prayerless into a praying man. "Behold, he prayeth," is the Scripture announcement of a sinner's conversion to God ; and a neglect of this duty is considered as furnishing sufficient proof of the unsoundness of any man's religion, however promising it once may have been. Acts 9 : 11 ; Job 27 : 10.

II. THE NATURE OF PRAYER.

Though the Scriptures thus inculcate the obligation to prayer, they are very far from approving every thing which bears the name. The Pharisees made long prayers, and yet to the holy Jesus no class of sinners were more offensive. Matt. 5 : 20 ; 6 : 5. It concerns us all to know what are *the essential characteristics* of that prayer which God will accept. The Scriptures represent it under a variety of phraseology, as "drawing near to God"—"speaking unto the Lord"—"declaring to him our ways"—"pouring out

our heart before him"—"coming to the throne of grace," etc. Psalm 73 : 28 ; Gen. 18 : 27 ; Psalm 119 : 26 ; 62 : 8 ; Heb. 4 : 16. It has, by men uninspired, been well defined to be "the offering up of our desires to God, for things agreeable to his will." Without desires there can be no prayer, and none that is good except the desires be holy ; and these must be offered up to God. There may be prayer without the prostration of the body, or the moving of the lips, but not without the lifting up of the soul to God. Psalm 25 : 1.

Prayer is the language of *dependence*. It is poverty and emptiness, coming to infinite fulness for supplies—ignorance, coming to wisdom for instruction and guidance—weakness, leaning on almighty strength—pollution, repairing to the fountain which is opened for sin and uncleanness—guilt, pleading, not for a repeal of the law, but for the forgiveness of sin through an infinite atonement. To be prepared to engage in this duty, we must be humble. The pride of our heart must be brought down, and the Lord alone exalted. We must have faith ; believing that God is, and that he is infinitely great and good ; both able and willing to answer prayer. Nor can we be prepared to pray unless we exercise repentance for sin ; for if we regard iniquity in our heart, the Lord will not hear us.

A submissive spirit is another requisite for prayer. The acceptableness of the duty is increased as much by the cordiality of our submission, as by the strength of our faith. In our Saviour's prayer in the garden of agony, his submission, though wonderfully great, did not imply either the absence or weakness of his trust in God. Indeed, the graces of the Spirit, among which faith and submission hold a conspicuous place, do not seek each other's destruction ; on the contrary, they afford mutual aid in rendering prayer both more acceptable and prevalent.

A forgiving spirit is not less essential to the duty, than faith and submission. On this point our divine Teacher is very explicit: "When ye stand praying, forgive, if ye have aught against any; that your Father also, which is in heaven, may forgive you your trespasses." While we are in the attitude of prayer, pleading with God to forgive us, we must do the same towards our fellow-men from whom we have received injuries.

As prayer includes thanksgiving for favors received, a *thankful spirit* is indispensable to a right performance of the duty. Isa. 66 : 2; Heb. 11 : 6; Psalm 66 : 18; Matt. 26 : 39; Mark 11 : 25; Phil. 4 : 6.

In prayer we have concern with *each of the Persons of the Godhead.* We address the *Father,* in the name of the *Son,* by the special aid of the *Spirit.* This is all spread before us in one short verse: "For through *Him* we both have access by one *Spirit* unto the *Father.*" Ephes. 2 : 18. The Son directs us to pray to the Father in his name. Should we forget this direction, and venture to go in our own name, our petitions will remain unanswered. It is equally necessary that we remember our dependence on the Holy Spirit, lest, by rejecting his proffered aid, and trusting in our own gifts, we incur the guilt, like Nadab and Abihu, of offering strange fire before the Lord. Rom. 8 : 26, 27; Jude 20; Lev. 10 : 1. Should our devotions be regulated by the best of forms, still, if the Spirit do not help our infirmities, we cannot pray.

The matter of prayer is very copious. There is no sin we commit, but it is to be confessed; no mercy we need, for the body or the soul, for ourselves or others, but we are to ask it of God; no favor received, for which we are not to render thanks; no duty to be done, nor affliction to be borne, but we need help in it from God. "In every thing," said the apostle, "by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known unto God." Phil.

4 : 6. We are required to intercede for our children and relatives, our civil rulers and spiritual guides, for the church and the unbelieving world. Gen. 43 : 14; 25 : 21; 1 Tim. 2 : 1–3; Psalm 122 : 6; Rom. 10 : 1.

The burden of our petitions, however, should be for those blessings which are spiritual and enduring. Of six petitions in the Lord's prayer, only one relates to the things of the present life. These are a mere scaffolding, on which to stand while putting up an edifice that is to remain when the earth and the works thereof shall be burnt up.

We should especially pray for the *influences of the Holy Spirit*, which our Lord has represented as comprehending all the good we need. Compare Matt. 7 : 11 with Luke 11 : 13. The atonement is already made; the Scriptures are written; the great blessing which now remains to be received, is the gift of the Spirit. If this gift be withheld, all other means will fail to effect the conversion of a single sinner. Until the Spirit be poured from on high, the earth will remain a moral wilderness. And when any part of it is changed into a fruitful field, and become the Lord's vineyard, it cannot retain its fruitfulness except by a continuance of this divine watering, which it needs, not once a year, but every moment. Isa. 32 : 15; 27 : 3.

The Scriptures, as we have seen, encourage us to bring every thing into our prayers; yet not into the same exercise. The prayers we find in them are *adapted to existing circumstances*. When Moses interceded for the children of Israel, whom the Lord had threatened to destroy, he adapted his petitions to the urgency of their case. When Solomon prayed at the first opening of the temple, his prayer was dedicatory. The Saviour's intercessory prayer, which he made with his disciples just as he was about to leave them, was peculiarly appropriate to that interesting occasion. Exodus 32 : 31, 32; 1 Kings, 8; John 17.

The prayers of the Bible also abound with *arguments.* This is true of the prayers of Abraham, Jacob, Moses, Joshua, David, Jehoshaphat, Hezekiah, Nehemiah, Daniel, and also of the prayers of Christ. Gen. 18 : 23–33 ; 32 : 9–12 ; Num. 14 : 13–19 ; Josh. 7 : 7–9 ; Psalm 25 : 11 ; 2 Chron. 20 : 5–12 ; 2 Kings, 19 : 14–19 ; Neh. 1 ; Dan. 9 ; John 17. The Lord's prayer concludes with three strong arguments, or reasons, why the preceding petitions should be granted. These arguments are not selfish. They all honor God. We pray him to answer our requests, because the kingdom, whose advancement is sought, is his own ; the power to advance it is in his own hands ; and the glory will redound to his own great name for ever. The more perfectly we understand and love the character of God, and the great principles he has adopted for the government of his moral kingdom and the redemption of a fallen world, and the more fully we imbibe the spirit of his holy word, the better prepared we shall be to "order our cause before him, and fill our mouth with arguments." Job 23 : 4.

The style of prayer demands consideration. This, when the exercise is extemporaneous, depends wholly on the person who leads. Rhetorical flourishes and bombastic expressions never appear so improper as in this exercise. Let him who is speaking in prayer but keep in mind that he is dust and ashes, addressing the Lord of heaven and earth ; that he is a guilty sinner, pleading for pardon before the mercy-seat ; and let him at the same time possess the spirit of adoption, and it cannot fail to give solemnity, humility, and a childlike simplicity to his attitude, voice, and language. Violent gestures, a noisy utterance, and dictatorial and censorious language, are utterly incompatible with the nature of this duty. Every thing calculated to give pain to devout worshippers, or diminish our awe of the divine Majesty, should be carefully avoided.

III. THE BENEFIT OF PRAYER.

1. *It honors God.* It is a practical acknowledgment of his being, perfections, and providence, and of our entire dependence on him for all we possess. Those creatures of God who never repair to his mercy-seat to ask for needed favors or counsel, virtually deny his existence. By such he is not glorified. See Psalm 50 : 23, with Mal. 3 : 13–15. Is it not evident to all, that God is honored by the praying, rather than by the prayerless man; by the praying, rather than by the prayerless family; and by a praying community, whether town, city, state, or kingdom, rather than by such as call not on his name?

2. *Prayer promotes both the sanctification and enjoyment of those who engage in the duty.* That immediate converse we have with God when we pray, gives us uncommonly clear views of his being and perfections; and the acquaintance we form with ourselves, while on our knees before him, is the most thorough and useful. Hence, prayer greatly promotes repentance for sin. It also promotes faith in Christ; for we present all our petitions in his worthy name. Here, also, we gain the most correct and impressive views of divine Providence, tranquillizing our troubled minds, and drawing forth our gratitude and praise. Nothing more powerfully excites benevolent feelings towards our fellow-men, enemies as well as friends, than to pray for them. Indeed prayer, considered as a means of cleansing the heart and improving the character, is of such importance that none can be prepared for heaven without it.

Nor is it less essential to our *enjoyment.* "It is good for me to draw near unto God," said one who knew what nearness to God was. In prosperity no joy can be compared with this; and nothing is like it to sweeten the bitter cup of affliction. "Is any among you afflicted," says an apostle, "let him pray." James 5 : 13.

One would suppose that without prayer, as the means of relieving the troubled breast, the evils of the present life would be quite insupportable. "I wonder," said an aged saint, who had been speaking of the comforts he derived from prayer and meditation during the wakeful hours of night, "I wonder what those old people do for comfort, who have such sleepless hours, and yet have no God to think of or pray to."

3. *Prayer is prevalent with God.* It is the key which unlocks the treasury of heaven. God has said to the children of men, "Ask, and ye shall receive." And again he has said, "Ye have not, because ye ask not." It is a most meagre and defective view of the benefit of prayer, that it consists merely in preparing the minds of those who pray to receive blessings. Has the Scripture said in vain, "The effectual fervent prayer of the righteous man availeth much?" James 5 : 16. See also Zech. 10 : 1; Luke 11 : 13; Matt. 9 : 37, 38; 2 Thess. 3 : 1. If prayer has no influence in obtaining blessings, why does it include *intercession?* The very object of this department of the duty is to help *others;* and frequently, those who are absent, and know not that prayer is made for them. Do we not pray for the sick, to obtain for them the blessing of health? Do not saints pray for sinners, to procure their conversion, rather than for the purpose of preparing themselves to enjoy it? 2 Cor. 1 : 11; James 5 ; 15; Rom. 10 : 1.

Prayer, unlike all other means, *exerts its influence on God himself.* Renouncing dependence on all created objects, we say unto God, "Neither know we what to do, but our eyes are unto thee." 2 Chron. 20 : 12. That God views the prayers of his people as designed to exert an influence on himself, is made evident by his saying to Moses, when he was about to intercede for the idolatrous Israelites, "Let me alone." Exod. 32 : 10.

That the prayers of the righteous are prevalent with God, appears also in the dispensations of his *providence and grace.* The prayers of Jacob at Peniel were prevalent. The prayers of Moses and Joshua were also prevalent. So were the prayers of Hannah, Samuel, and David. The Scriptures of the Old Testament furnish many other instances of evident answers to prayer. See Gen. 32; Ps. 106:23; Josh. 10:12; 1 Sam. 1:27; 7:9–12; Ps. 18:6–50; 1 Kings, 18:36–45; 2 Chron. 14:9–15; 20:5–30; 32:20–23; Ezra 8:21, 31; Neh. 1, 2; Dan. 9:21–23; Esther 4:16, compared with the subsequent parts of the book. The New Testament history agrees with the Old in representing prayer as *efficacious.* The ceaseless prayers of the church delivered Peter from prison and from death. And surely that praying breath was not spent in vain, which called down such a mighty influence, that in one day three thousand souls were turned from the power of Satan unto God. See Acts 1:14, with 2:41; 12:5–17. To be the Hearer of prayer, is the memorial of Zion's God throughout all generations. Ps. 65:2.

Could we have the history of the Christian church fully placed before us, it would furnish innumerable cases where fervent, united, and persevering prayer for the outpouring of the Spirit, has been answered in the bestowment of this greatest of all blessings. I well remember, many years ago, when revivals of religion were less frequent in this country, hearing a Christian pastor, who was watching for souls, express strong confidence that the Lord was about to pour out his Spirit on his people, assigning as his reason, that the Jacobs among them were wrestling. A few months after, on seeing him again, and inquiring, "Do your Jacobs continue to wrestle?" he replied, with an overflowing heart, "The blessing has come." This case has nothing peculiar in it; the chronicles of "the Israel of God" could furnish thousands of similar examples.

Who can tell what a multitude of the seed of God's people have been brought into the fold of Christ in answer to the prayers of their *pious parents?* The case of Monica, the mother of Augustine, whose fervent and long-continued prayers for her son were answered in his conversion and singular usefulness to the cause of truth, is well known in the history of the church. In a sketch, a few years since, of the life of an aged Christian in the state of Maine, it was particularly stated that he had been observed to pray much for his children, and his children's children, and more remote posterity; not that they might abound in wealth, but in grace, and the comforts of the Holy Ghost. And when in a good old age he was gathered to his fathers, and was followed to the grave by an uncommon number of descendants, almost all of them who had come to mature years, appeared to be the humble disciples of Christ. Were every good man to write his own biography, there would be found in it many a record similar to that of the Psalmist: "Verily, God hath heard me; he hath attended to the voice of my prayer." He would state, at such and such a time the Lord mercifully prepared my heart to pray; and in such and such ways he made it manifest that he had caused his ear to hear. Psalm 66 : 19; 10 : 17; 116 : 1, 2. The devout man rests satisfied that the prayer which God requires, and which is dictated by his Spirit, is always acceptable to him, and that it invariably procures either the specific blessing sought, or something else which is preferable. 2 Cor. 12 : 7, 9.

Let it here be remembered, that the Scriptures do not speak of the exclusive acceptableness of the prayers of the righteous, with an intention to exempt the wicked from *obligation* to pray; nor, indeed, to discourage them from attempting the duty; but rather to make them feel the necessity of an inward and radical change to render their

prayers, and all their other performances, pleasing to a holy God. As God commands all men everywhere to repent, so he commands all men everywhere to pray; but he commands them to pray, "lifting up holy hands." Acts 17 : 30; 1 Tim. 2 : 8. Living without prayer, God may continue to you, for a time, the bounties of his providence, but the light of his countenance you have not; your sins are not forgiven, nor have you a single promise relating to the life to come. And those gifts which you have, without asking them of God, or giving him thanks for them, will soon be remanded, and then, if not before, you will be able to "discern between the righteous and the wicked; between him that serveth God, and him that serveth him not." Mal. 3 : 18.

IV. THE OCCASIONS FOR PRAYER.

The apostle exhorts Christians to pray with "all prayer," that is, in all those ways which our various circumstances and relations in society may call for. Two, and even many of the humble disciples of Christ, may unite in the same prayer, and with "one accord"—in the same adorations, confessions, petitions, and ascriptions of praise. They will feel that they are all the same guilty creatures, coming to the same merciful Creator, and in the name of a common Mediator. Such prayer, whether it be pronounced with one mouth, or many using a common form, should unite the hearts of all. No one should imagine he has prayed, merely because he has heard another pray. It is a union of souls, not an assemblage of bodies, which gives strength to prayer. The Saviour taught his disciples that the *agreement* of two would augment its prevalence. Matt. 18 : 19. When Daniel had Nebuchadnezzar's dream with its interpretation to find out, he applied to three of his countrymen, whom he knew to be men of prayer, to unite with

him in desiring mercies of the God of heaven concerning this secret; assuming the principle, that a union of hearts increases the prevalence of prayer. This is true, whether they whose hearts are united should form a meeting for social prayer, or should agree to present their common request in their respective closets. The most important branches of this duty are the following:

1. *Sanctuary prayer.* None can doubt that prayer is a proper exercise for the Lord's house. Christ called the temple "a house of prayer," and the appellation is with equal propriety applied to a Christian sanctuary. It is the King's business which is here transacted, and He claims to be consulted about it. Here the ordinances are administered, and the officers of the church solemnly consecrated; and both these exercises are to be accompanied with prayer. Matt. 26 : 26, 27; Acts 14 : 23. Here, also, the Gospel is preached, and it must be with the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven, or it will be without effect. And surely we cannot expect the descent of the blessed Spirit upon a prayerless assembly. See 2 Chron. 30 : 27; Ezra 9 : 4–15; Psalm 116 : 17–19; Matt. 11 : 25–30; Acts 6 : 4; 1 Cor. 14 : 14–17; 1 Tim. 2 : 1.

The prayers of the sanctuary are an interesting part of its services. They ought to embrace a greater number of objects than social prayer in general, but not to the exclusion of a special remembrance of the wants of the assembly. Prayer should not be substituted for preaching; it should ever be considered as an address to God, not to the people; and yet the influence which is exerted on an assembly by a solemn and devout prayer, is often as direct and manifest as that exerted by preaching.

2. *Prayer-meetings.* In such meetings, Christians are advantageously situated to strive together in their prayers to God, for the advancement of his kingdom. Such was

the meeting held by the one hundred and twenty disciples in the upper room, before the great effusion of the Spirit on the day of Pentecost; and that also at the house of Mary, where many were gathered together to pray for the liberation of Peter. This class of meetings may be either ordinary, to ask for those blessings which we always stand in need of, or extraordinary, to pray for some particular object, the importance of which is suggested by passing events. Not being designed for those services which are peculiar to the pastor, they do not necessarily require his presence, or that of any of the officers of the church. But, if wholly composed of its officers—and is it not desirable that this should sometimes be the case?—still, they would be prayer-meetings. Would we have these seasons of devotion interesting and profitable, we must remember them beforehand, in our closets, and go to them with praying hearts. Nor ought those to neglect this preparation who do not expect to lead in these exercises. Let a company of praying people come together in a prayerful frame, and they can hardly fail to have a profitable prayer-meeting. The reading of some short and pertinent passage from the Scriptures, or from some religious book or periodical, brief and well-adapted remarks or exhortations, and songs of praise, may help to quicken their devotions. When the meeting is more particularly intended for conference and discussion, as is doubtless sometimes desirable, a greater portion of the time may be occupied in reading and conversation. But whether it be called a conference, or a prayer-meeting, it ought ever to be sanctified by the spirit of devotion, and the love of the truth. However lightly many may think of these unostentatious assemblies, they have been found almost indispensable to the Christian's growth in grace, and greatly instrumental in bringing forward and sustaining revivals of religion.

The *monthly concert*, observed on the first Monday of every month, is a prayer-meeting, and one of uncommon interest. It extends to all nations where the Christian religion is embraced in its purity. It came into existence simultaneously with the missionary and other benevolent institutions of these latter days; and when it is viewed in connection with the special efforts now making by the various denominations of evangelical Christians, it may be considered as their united declaration, that they feel themselves entirely dependent on God for success in all their attempts for the conversion of the world. Could we see this concert observed by greater numbers, and with a deeper interest—could we have reason to believe that every Christian observed it, either in a social or a secret manner, presenting both prayers and pecuniary offerings, we should have ground for strong hopes of the near approach of millennial glory. Some other days are also set apart by Christians, to pray in concert for particular objects. That for Sabbath-schools is somewhat extensively observed, on the second Monday in the month. These, and numerous other objects, are of sufficient importance to draw forth many of the prayers of Zion.

3. *Prayer among select friends.* We read of Christ's praying with the twelve, and also of his selecting three of their number to go up with him into a mountain to pray. Luke 9 : 28. There is perhaps no social prayer so sweet as that which is made by a few select friends, who, concerning the things of the kingdom of God, are every way like-minded. In its freedom from restraint it resembles the devotions of the closet, and at the same time receives strength by a union of hearts; and while it brings the worshippers near to God, it has a powerful influence in promoting among themselves what the apostolic benediction implores for all saints, "The *communion* of the Holy Ghost."

Under this head may be included those seasons of prayer which Christians sometimes do, and should oftener, connect with their social visits. An interview designed to be closed with prayer, will, on this very account, be rendered more edifying. Who has not been affected in reading the narrative of Paul's taking his leave of the Ephesian elders at Miletus, and of other friends on the shore at Tyre? In both these instances the parting prayer is to the pious reader the most affecting particular. Acts 20 : 36; 21 : 5.

This kind of social prayer will include those seasons, either occasional or stated, when a few Christian friends meet on purpose to unbosom the emotions of their hearts to each other, and to their heavenly Father. It is doubtless entirely proper that meetings of this class should often be wholly composed of *females*. When the Scriptures narrate the devout praises of Moses and the children of Israel at the Red Sea, they add that Miriam took a timbrel in her hand, and all the women went out after her. After Esther had given a charge to Mordecai to gather the Jews of Shushan to keep a fast, she adds, I also and my maidens will fast likewise. Exod. 15 : 20, 21; Esther 4 : 16. See also Judges 21 : 21; Luke 1 : 38–56. There are many pious females, who, without neglecting their domestic concerns, or withdrawing themselves from the public prayer-meetings, can devote an hour or two each week to a meeting of their own; and there is reason to believe that meetings of this description are at this moment exerting a very happy influence in raising the tone of female piety, in promoting the charitable objects of the day, and in calling down the blessing of the Holy Spirit.

4. *Family prayer.* All the families of the earth ought to call on the name of the Lord, and have reason to fear the pouring out of his fury upon them if they refuse to do it. Jer. 10 : 25. No house should be without its family altar.

Abraham, the father of all who have true faith, set us a worthy example: wherever he pitched his tent, he erected an altar, and called on the name of the Lord. Joshua resolved, "As for me and my house, we will serve the Lord." David worshipped in the sanctuary, and then returned to bless his household. Gen. 12 : 7, 8 ; 13 : 18 ; Joshua 24 : 15 ; 2 Samuel, 6 : 20. Our Saviour, whose example is law, observed this duty as far as his circumstances in life permitted. He had no other family than his twelve disciples: with these he daily ate, travelled, and conversed; and with these he prayed. By his praying sometimes with the whole number, and at other times with a part, has he not encouraged parents to adopt a similar practice in relation to their children? Luke 9 : 18 ; 11 : 1, with 9 : 28, and Matthew 26 : 36, 37. Every precept which requires parents religiously to educate their children, obliges them to the performance of this duty. To profess to bring them up "in the nurture and admonition of the Lord," and yet not pray with them—what can be more contradictory?

The spirit and order of family worship are of great importance. At the regular hours for its observance, parents, children, and domestics, should all be assembled in one place, and their business be discontinued, while the word of God is read, or his praises sung, and the throne of grace addressed. All should listen to the reading, and join in the other exercises. The greater the number of praying souls in the domestic circle, the more interest will it give to this exercise. When the father and the mother are both heirs of the grace of life, and live in character, their prayers will not be hindered, and may be expected to avail before God. 1 Peter, 3 : 1–7. And when the children and servants become heirs of the same grace, that house may truly be called a *Bethel*, a house of prayer.

It is to be regretted that this service should ever be

rendered tedious by long, formal, and inappropriate prayers. An understanding richly enlightened with divine truth, and a heart warmed with divine love, constitute the best preparation for the duty, and will render the exercise edifying, whether brief, or more protracted. The state of the family, the chapter which is read, or the hymn which is sung, may all suggest matter for the prayer. The family sins should be confessed, their mercies acknowledged, and their wants spread before the mercy-seat. All are to be prayed for collectively, and if circumstances call for it, individually. Such particularity arrests attention. In a family of the writer's acquaintance, a little girl at the age of eight appeared to become a subject of renewing grace, whose attention was first arrested at the family altar by hearing her father pray for *the children*. In that branch of domestic worship already hinted at, when the family are taken in smaller portions, or individually, into the secret chamber, the petitions can be more minutely specific and adapted. Dr. Cotton Mather had fifteen children, and lived to see the greater part of them die in the Lord. When they were capable of understanding him, he would take them alone, one by one, and after many affectionate admonitions to the child, would pray with him and make him the witness of the agonies and strong cries with which, on his behalf, he addressed the throne of grace.

In this department of the worship of the family, Christian *mothers* are under obligation to take a large share. This falls within their appropriate sphere of action; and it gives them opportunity to labor advantageously for the salvation of their beloved offspring. Prov. 31 : 2. When the father is absent from home, or the mother is left in widowhood, she becomes the head of the family, and to her it belongs to offer the daily sacrifice of prayer and praise on the domestic altar.

The *giving of thanks at our meals* is comprehended in family worship. This practice is enforced by the example of our divine Lord, who gave thanks not only at the sacramental supper, but repeatedly at other meals. Luke 9 : 16 ; 24 : 30. Paul, on board the ship, "took bread and gave thanks to God in presence of them all." Acts 27 : 35. This act of worship, though very brief, is one which frequently renews its claims upon us, and is too important to be neglected, or performed in a cold and formal manner.

There are other occasions for social prayer, of which the limits of this Tract allow only a very brief notice.

5. *Prayer connected with pastoral visits.* It is expressly required that the elders of the church should pray with the sick. James 5 : 14, 15. Prayer is very properly connected with other pastoral visits. As the ministers of Christ are under obligation to teach, not only in public, but from house to house, so their corresponding duty is prayer in private families as well as in the public assembly. Nor can any doubt the propriety of connecting prayer with the religious visits which are made by the subordinate officers of the church, or by other members appointed to this service.

6. *Prayer in schools.* Prayer is a suitable exercise in schools of every description—not only in those devoted to religious instruction, as Sabbath-schools and theological seminaries, but also in schools of science. Nothing is of greater moment to the welfare of our country than the character of its schools. In these the children and youth of our land are preparing to act on the stage of life ; and it is inconceivably important that they all should be exerting a good influence on the youthful character. The blessing of God should be implored *on* them all, by the religious community, and *in* them all, by their respective teachers. From the university down to the infant school, none should be without prayer—solemn, affectionate, and appropriate pray-

er. It is calculated, perhaps above all other means, to impress the minds of the young; and is the appointed way of calling down upon them the blessing of heaven.

7. *Prayer connected with the transaction of public business.* "He, whose name alone is Jehovah, is the Most High over all the earth"—"the Governor among the nations." He requires that we should acknowledge him in all our ways; and this requisition extends to us in our *national*, as well as individual capacity. What can be more strictly proper, than the practice of opening our *legislative assemblies* with a solemn and devout recognition of our dependence on Him, and of his supreme dominion over us. How suitable, that the legislators of the nation should come, in the attitude of prayer, to the divine Lawgiver, to ask him to assist them to frame such laws for the nation, as shall resemble the laws he has made for the universe; and to preserve them from enacting any law which shall contravene his own. Nor is it less proper that *courts of justice* should be opened by solemn prayer to God. He is the "Judge of all the earth;" yet he concerns himself with the proceedings of all the inferior courts throughout his extensive dominion. "Take heed," said king Jehoshaphat to the judges of his courts, "Take heed what ye do; for ye judge not for man, but for the Lord, who is with you in the judgment. Wherefore now let the fear of the Lord be upon you: take heed and do it; for there is no iniquity with the Lord our God, nor respect of persons, nor taking of gifts." 2 Chron. 19 : 6, 7. Let such sentiments as these impress the public mind, and prayer to God will accompany the administration of justice; prayer, that judges, jurors, and counsellors may possess discernment and impartiality; that witnesses may be preserved from perjury or the misrepresentation of facts; and that righteous decisions may in every instance be given.

Two very important departments of solitary prayer remain to be considered.

8. *Ejaculatory prayer.* This branch of devotion has no restrictions of time or place. It can be breathed out in solitude, or in the midst of company. It may be so intense as to divert our attention from every other pursuit, or it may coëxist with vigorous exercises of the body and mind. It may accompany the godly man while employed in the labors of his field or shop, and the godly woman in the labors of her house. It may be protracted through all the hours of the day, whether we are at home or abroad, without interrupting our business or our journey. It was in ejaculatory prayer that the mother of Samuel poured out her soul before the Lord. 1 Sam. 1 : 13. This is the kind of prayer which Nehemiah offered to the King of heaven at the very moment when presenting his petition to the king of Persia. Nehemiah 2 : 4. The meditations in which holy David seemed so much to delight, were filled with adorations, confessions, petitions, and thanksgivings. The longest and most devotional of all his psalms, every verse of which expresses his high regard for the inspired word, appears to be a collection of such ejaculations as from time to time he had breathed out into the bosom of his God.

This is a branch of devotion to which no true Christian can be a stranger: prayer is the *breath* of every one who is born of God. Lam. 3 : 56; Acts 9 : 11. It may be so increased as to fill up all the vacancies of our time, sanctify all the business of life, and sweeten all its bitter cups, even at the very moment when we are drinking them off. The more constantly our hearts are engaged in holy aspirations to God, the better will be our preparation to attend on all the stated services of religion. This, like the fire which was ever kept burning upon the altar, will kindle every sacrifice. Levit. 6 : 13.

9. *Closet prayer.* Though a closet is a small apartment within the house, our Saviour used the word to mean any place where, with no embarrassment, either from the fear or pride of observation, we can freely pour out our hearts in prayer to God. The devotions of the closet require both *time* and *place.* That this was the Saviour's view of the matter, we learn both from what he taught and practised. He taught us, when we were about to pray to our Father in secret, to "enter into our closet and shut the door." This direction lays us under obligation to take pains to retire from business and company. And his own example is proof, that, by entering into the closet and shutting the door, he meant we should go into a place of retirement. At one time we read of his departing, unaccompanied by any of his disciples, into a solitary place to pray; and at another, of his going up into a mountain apart to pray. Mark 1 : 35; Matt. 14 : 23. Jacob's prayer at Peniel belongs to this class of devotions; and to prepare himself to engage in it, he dropped all business from his hands, and secluded himself from the society of his own family.

Ejaculatory prayer, as we have seen, is of great importance; yet the prayer of the closet has the preëminence. This excels the other in its tendency to promote depth of feeling, intimacy of communion, and importunity of desire. To preserve the distinction between these two kinds of secret devotion, is of greater importance to a life of piety than many imagine. A whole day of fervent ejaculations, whether we are at home or on a journey, does not release us from obligation to remember the closet exercises of the evening.

Does the duty of prayer require any stated seasons for its performance? "Stated seasons," said the pious Baxter, "are the hedge of duty." He said the truth; for the breaking down of the hedge which incloses your field,

would not more certainly expose the crop to be destroyed, than the relinquishment of stated seasons for your religious duties would expose the soul to famish. It has been objected, that such regularity in religious exercises is unfavorable to devotion, and that it even implies a denial of our dependence on the help of the Spirit. But the divine appointment of the weekly Sabbath shows that God is not offended with regularity in our devotions; and the daily sacrifice, offered every morning and evening in the church of Israel, is a valid argument in favor of the regular worship of God every morning and evening through the whole week. Concerning Solomon, or rather one greater than Solomon, it is said, "Prayer also shall be made for him continually, and daily shall he be praised." Psalm 72 : 15. "Every day," said the devout Psalmist, "will I bless thee." Psalm 145 : 2. In the life of Christ, who is our supreme example, particular mention is made of his morning and evening devotions.

Family and closet prayer should be considered as *daily* duties; and neither of them be less frequent than morning and evening. And between these two extreme parts of the day, the distance seems too great to be passed over without some intervening regular devotion. Is it not practicable for most to have a stated season for closet prayer in the middle of the day? At this hour Peter went up upon the house-top to pray. Acts 10 : 9. Among the *pious resolutions* of a king, who was far from being neglectful of the concerns of his kingdom, this was one: "Evening and morning, and at noon, will I pray." Psalm 55 : 17. This is also recorded among the *pious practices* of one of the most fully occupied men who ever held an office in a king's court. Dan. 6 : 10. The closet requires stated seasons, and of frequent recurrence, which must not be passed by: nor are these enough to satisfy the man of prayer. In a duty of such vital importance, and one which is so much under individual

control, it would indicate a low state of piety, always to wait for the return of the regular seasons. Every man who feels for the honor of God, and the interest of religion in his own heart, in his own family, and in the world, has much that he wishes to carry to God in prayer. And the closet is eminently the place where he unburdens himself, and fills his mouth with arguments. Here he pleads for others as well as himself. He brings before God many individual cases, both of believers and unbelievers. Here he can tell his Father who seeth in secret, every thing that he hopes, and every thing he fears concerning himself and the individuals for whom he intercedes. Is there not reason to conclude it was principally in the closet that Paul made so many prayers for particular churches and individual believers? See Rom. 1 : 9 ; Ephes. 1 : 15, 16 ; Phil. 1 : 3, 4 ; Col. 1 : 3 ; 1 Thess. 1 : 2 ; 2 Tim. 1 : 3 ; Philemon ver. 4.

A sketch has now been given of the various kinds of prayer, both social and secret, none of which can be omitted without great hazard to the soul. Between these different kinds of prayer there is a perfect harmony. Ejaculations will seek to find a closet, and the exercises of the closet will lead to the family altar, and the sanctuary. *Secret* duties are, however, peculiarly indispensable ; since, without these, piety can have no existence in any heart. These, indeed, are the only duties which the child of God can be sure of enjoying. His situation may be such, at least for a season, as to shut him out of the sanctuary ; and he may hold such a subordinate place in the domestic circle as to be unable to enjoy family worship ; but should he be placed in servitude, exile, or the prison, he can pray to his Father in secret. Nothing but a prayerless heart can prevent this intercourse with God.

There is an appendage, that the Scriptures sometimes connect with prayer, both social and solitary, which I know

not how to pass over unnoticed. I refer to *fasting*. Christ himself fasted, and his disciples frequently connected fasting with their prayers. It is a solemn accompaniment, to which there is a peculiar propriety in resorting in times of exigency, whether in relation to ourselves, our families, the church, or the nation. Our Lord, when speaking of the ejection of an unclean spirit, said, "This kind goeth not out but by prayer and fasting," Matt. 17 : 21 ; and may we not conclude that the adversary of souls, who is still abroad in the earth, will not be expelled and confined to his prison until there has first been much prayer and fasting? Let those who are anxious to see the earth freed from his polluting influence, not wait for public fasts to be proclaimed by church or state; but, like David, and Nehemiah, and Daniel, and Anna, let them appoint fasts for themselves. See 2 Sam. 12 : 16; Nehem. 1 : 4; Dan. 9 : 3; Luke 2 : 37. Before that foul spirit shall be cast out, and the earth filled with the glory of the Redeemer's kingdom, there is reason to believe that, among other means to effect this glorious revolution, there will be a great multiplication of *secret fasts*. Matt. 6 : 16–18; Zech. 12 : 10–14.

Christians, I cannot close my remarks on this practical subject without a solemn appeal to you. I address not mere members of the church, but the spiritual *members of Christ*. You constitute but a small part of the inhabitants of the earth; a small part of Christendom; and it is to be feared, the minority of Christian churches. Yet, in the moral conflict in our world, you alone constitute "God's host;" while all the rest of the race form an opposing army. The controversy is founded on the claims of Christ to universal dominion. The side you have chosen—and O, how great the mercy which led you to make such a choice—is the side which is approved by all holy beings, and which the Spirit of truth has foretold shall be victorious.

"These shall make war with the Lamb, and the Lamb shall overcome them: for he is Lord of lords, and King of kings; and they that are with him are called, and chosen, and faithful." "The saints of the Most High shall take the kingdom, and possess the kingdom for ever." Rev. 17 : 14; Daniel 7 : 18. Christians, remember that great things are to be effected by your instrumentality. It is under your feet that the God of peace will shortly bruise Satan, that fallen spirit who heads the opposition. Rom. 16 : 20. The saints of the Most High are to take, as well as possess, the kingdom; and in the decisive battle, in which the Lamb shall overcome, he is to be followed by a valiant band, even such as are "called, and chosen, and faithful."

As Christian warriors, you are furnished with many weapons which are mighty, through God, to pull down the strong-holds of the enemy; but none is more effectual than *prayer*. It is a weapon peculiar to yourselves: not an individual of all the opposition can use it. It is the weapon by which Israel of old gained the victory. But for the hand lifted up to God in the heavens, Israel had been discomfited, and Amalek had prevailed. Exod. 17. Their prayer took hold on divine strength, and brought the Mighty One of Jacob to their help. The millennium, the thousand years of the Redeemer's reign, is drawing near, but it can never be introduced until the spirit of prayer shall be greatly increased. Before the earth can be made to bring forth in one day, or a nation be born at once, Zion must travail in agonizing prayer. Isa. 66 : 8. The God of Zion has taken the mercy-seat, and is now waiting to receive the petitions of his people. He has himself commanded us to be importunate in presenting them: "Ye that make mention of the Lord, keep not silence, and give him no rest, till he establish, and till he make Jerusalem a praise in the earth." Isa. 62 : 6, 7.

Prayer is a peculiarly precious exercise, since it brings us near to God, and keeps alive a sense of our dependence. It is the nature of prayer to feel its dependence on God for all things, even for its own existence; you will, therefore, not forget to pray that you may be *prayerful*. Cherish in your hearts the spirit of devotion. Multiply your *ejaculatory* petitions, so that the meditation of your heart may be truly acceptable in God's sight. Prize the *closet*. Rise early, or sit up late; or do both, to increase closet devotions. Redeem time from business and recreations, from unprofitable reading and conversation, to gain it for prayer. Let your *family worship* become more spiritual. Frequent *prayer-meetings*, if health and circumstances will permit, and seek for the Divine presence to give life to the prayers and interest to the whole exercise. Let the *Lord's day* be to you, more than ever, a day of devotion; and let the *Lord's house* become, in a more emphatic sense, "the house of prayer." Fill up every vacant moment after you have entered the sanctuary, by silent petitions for the blessing of God on its holy exercises.

Let prayer accompany every thing you undertake; and engage in nothing on which you dare not implore God's blessing. Pray that Christ's church on earth may become more pure and spiritual—that its discipline may be effectual —that it may be preserved from the deadening influence of erroneous doctrines and immoral practices—that its ministers may be qualified to discharge the duties of their sacred office—and that its light, shed on the surrounding world, may prove the means of converting multitudes to God.

Let there be much prayer for *revivals of religion*, that they may be the genuine work of the Holy Spirit. Before the latter day glory of the church shall arrive, there must be such a measure of divine influence shed down on Gospel lands as will altogether surpass any thing which has

yet been experienced. And to prepare the way for this ineffable blessing, there must be such a holy fervor, such a sweet union, and such an unbroken hold in prayer, as we have never yet known. Let us neither expect nor desire it in any other way. The conversion of Christendom itself would seem to call for all this prayerfulness; and yet a world of unbelieving Jews, Mahomedans, and Pagans, all need our most fervent intercessions. Brethren, let us be up and doing. Every thing within our power let us do to establish the reign of the Prince of peace. Let those who have money give freely and liberally; and to their pecuniary offerings let them add their prayers. Let those who have qualifications, go into the field of labor, and bear the heat and burden of the day; and let them add much prayer to their toilsome labors. And if there be any, among all those whom God has laid under everlasting obligation by the redemption of their souls, who can neither become laborers themselves, nor furnish money, let such do what they can: let them give a holy example, and contribute liberally of their PRAYERS.

Has any PRAYERLESS SINNER read these pages? Dear, precious immortal, we tremble for you. Continuing as you are, your state is hopeless. To the great Hearer of prayer you are unreconciled. But, through the atoning blood of Christ, even you may come to his throne of mercy and be accepted. Now, be entreated to hear and obey his voice of warning and of love: "Seek ye the Lord while he may be found, call ye upon him while he is near: let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts: and let him return unto the Lord, and he will have mercy upon him; and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon."

NOTE. A premium of fifty dollars, offered by a friend, was awarded to the author of this Tract.

No. 272.

THE ADVANTAGES

OF

SABBATH-SCHOOLS.

While contemplating "the signs of the times," we have sometimes thought, that "if the Holy Spirit were again, as of old, to select twelve men with whom to finish the great work of converting mankind," and for this purpose should direct them to any special means, *the establishment and constant improvement of* Sabbath-schools would engage a large portion of their attention.

By this remark we intend not to disparage any of the grand and comprehensive schemes of modern benevolence which contemplate the universal extension of the Redeemer's kingdom. No; we view them all with unfeigned approbation and delight. The Bible society, distributing to a guilty world that volume from the throne of God, which is able to make men "wise unto salvation;" the missionary society, pouring its flood of heavenly light on the deep darkness of heathen superstition and idolatry; the Tract society, scattering its voiceless heralds of mercy where the living preacher might never come—we cordially hail them all as coworkers in the great enterprise of evangelizing mankind, and hastening the dawn of millennial glory.

In view of these and kindred institutions, each moving majestically onward in its appropriate walks of usefulness, the estimate we have given of the importance of the Sabbath-school system, associated as it is with the familiar and unassuming title of school, may seem to have been prompted by blind partiality or excited fancy. But the opinion

will scarce seem extravagant, if we consider the immense moral influence which this institution is yet to exert in promoting those two great ends of the divine administration, the welfare of man, and the glory of God. That this influence may be properly estimated, let us glance at the advantages of the Sabbath-school system, as displayed in the BENEFITS which it bestows, and the MANNER in which it confers them. We remark, then, that

The Sabbath-school system provides, by its schools, for *the intellectual improvement of its pupils.* This, though a subordinate object, is one of incalculable importance in its bearings on the character, usefulness, and happiness of mankind. Perhaps no country, as a whole, affords greater facilities for the education of its population than our own, and in no one certainly is education more valuable; yet even in this country the advantages of instruction are very unequally distributed. Up to the present hour, eight of our states and territories have no common-school system, and in several others the operations of that system are well-nigh paralyzed by the legislative limitation of its advantages to those who are willing to call themselves "the poor." And even where common-schools are most favorably organized, and most successfully conducted, they are, with few exceptions, inadequate to the wants of the rising generation. This is peculiarly true of our western and middle states. According to an official statement, there are, (1833,) in Pennsylvania, 250,000 children, between 5 and 15 years of age, who never see the inside of a school-house; and if that state be taken as a fair standard of computation, there are, in our own favored land, two millions and a half of children entirely destitute of common-school instruction.

All these, however, *will be* educated in industry or in idleness; in knowledge, or in ignorance; as good, or as evil members of society. For want of common-school instruction, they are, for the most part, unable to acquire that

knowledge which is the only safeguard of individual or national welfare, and are thus rendered liable to become, at any moment, the victims of temptation and depravity. Here, however, the Sabbath-school steps in to redeem them from degradation and vice, and train them up for intelligence and virtue. The common-school system, indeed, *aims* at the same results, and those results, were it universal, it might universally accomplish: but here it stops. Beyond this point its efforts are not even directed. And this suggests what is the prominent, and one of the most striking characteristics of the Sabbath-school system.

Its great aim is, to provide for the thorough *moral and religious education* of the rising generation. "Knowledge is power;" and the very best kind of power is that wisdom which cometh from above. One of the greatest blessings which can be conferred upon man is intellectual and religious instruction; the former to prepare him for respectability and usefulness on earth, the latter to guide him to regions of endless blessedness beyond the grave. The former, as we have seen, the Sabbath-school system neglects not; but it looks beyond this, and with an eye fixed on the eternal world, seeks to train up its pupils for glory, and honor, and immortality. It is the only general system of education which recognizes man in his true character as an intellectual and moral being, possessed of a never-dying spirit, whose capacities for enjoyment or misery must for ever expand, and who must dwell for ever with angels and the redeemed, amid the glories of heaven, or with devils and the damned, in the woes of hell. It brings the Bible, with all its motives of light and love, to instruct the understanding and sway the affections—to bear upon the conscience and influence the conduct. It throws around its pupils the powerful restraining influence of gospel truth, to fortify them against the assaults of temptation, to fit them for the discharge of the relative duties of life, and to prepare their minds for the cordial reception of divine truth.

Such an education affords the strongest assurance, that the individual on whom it is conferred will prove a blessing to himself and a blessing to society—will be happy on earth, and happy in heaven. Such an education is the highest boon that man can confer upon his fellow-man; for, if properly improved, it will guide him in safety through all his pilgrimage, afford him light in darkness, consolation in affliction, joy in sorrow, support in trial, victory in conflict, and life eternal in the midst of death.

But more than this; in every age and country, the *character and virtue of a people*, the prosperity which they enjoy, and the institutions which they possess, depend almost entirely upon the nature of their instruction. And what means are better adapted to promote the highest interests of a nation in these respects, than the correct religious education of the individuals composing it? What but this can raise them from the savage to a civilized state; from slaves to citizens; from the grossness of sensuality to the dignified enjoyment of cultivated life? What will so effectually diminish their temptations to crime, give a proper direction to their valuable qualities, control those which are dangerous and hurtful, and even render them subservient to the best interests of society? These are questions of the deepest interest to the philanthropist and the Christian. And while "the world is impelled, with such violence, in opposite directions; while a spirit of giddiness and revolt is shed abroad upon the nations, the only safety is in the improvement of the mass of the people in knowledge, probity, and the fear of the Lord. In the neglect of these, the politeness and refinement of knowledge accumulated in the higher orders, weak and impotent, will be exposed to the most imminent danger, and will perish like a garland in the grasp of popular fury."

Yes, the only security is to be found in *early religious instruction.* This, the Sabbath-school, supplying parental neglect or deficiency, or assisting parental faithfulness, at-

tempts to furnish. It acts on the principle that the immortal soul cannot be too early instructed in its duties and its prospects; that the best, if not the only way of preserving the mind from error, is to store it abundantly with religious knowledge; that the surest pledge of habitual obedience is a memory richly furnished with Scripture truths, which in the hour of temptation shall prompt the warning voice of conscience, or, like ministering spirits, sweetly whisper, "This is the way, walk ye in it." It affords, also, the best foundation for enlightened piety. Ignorance is not the mother of devotion, but sound religious instruction is the best preservative from superstition, fanaticism, and infidelity. Facts testify, that of those who, at the present day, become truly converted to God, a large proportion are those who have been brought up in Sabbath-schools. Of 787 hopefully converted to God in one district, within a year, 592 were either teachers or pupils of Sabbath-schools. In another district, reports from 50 towns give 150 teachers and 522 scholars, who, in a single year, made a profession of religion. During the first 14 years of the New York Sunday-school Union, 1,871 teachers and scholars made a profession of their faith in Christ, of whom 110 entered upon the study of divinity. Not less than 5,000 teachers, and 10,000 scholars, are estimated by the annual report of the American Sunday-school Union to have been converted in the year ending May, 1832. The number of conversions of persons connected with Sunday-schools, reported during the first eight years of the existence of that society, was 26,393. A multitude of other concurrent facts might be adduced. Thus, by providing for the thorough religious, scriptural education of its pupils, the Sabbath-school system, both by its direct and indirect influence, accomplishes an incalculable amount of good for the benefit of society, for the happiness of individuals on earth, and for the future welfare of the undying spirit.

But another and highly important feature of the Sab-

bath-school system is, that it aims to *provide suitable reading* for all who are within the sphere of its influence. "Let me write the ballads of a nation," said a discriminating observer of human nature—"let me write the ballads of a nation, and I care not who makes its laws." The remark was founded on a careful observation of the causes which form and modify national character, and it suggests the intimate connection which ever exists between popular feeling and the healthful moral sentiment of a community. But if such be the influence of *ballads*, how vast the influence of *the entire reading of all the children and youth* of a country. And when we remember that the annual increase of our reading population is not far from 300,000, how deeply important does it appear, that this influence be so directed as to promote the best interests of society, and the glory of God. That they may further, as far as possible, this great object, the American Sunday-school Union have assumed the responsible duty of providing rational and profitable reading for children and youth of our land, and are now preparing and sending forth books which cultivate the taste, improve the mind, recommend the institutions and enjoin the duties of Christianity, and urge upon the conscience and the heart the claims of personal religion. These little books are read by pupils and teachers. They are carried home, there to be taken up by those who would shrink from the task of perusing a larger volume. Their simplicity engages the mind and wins the attention, and brings the individual under the persuasive influence of example and precept. The old and the young read them with delight. The man of business takes them up in his moments of leisure, and the parent reads them in the midst of the attentive family circle. To all they impart profitable and pleasing instruction, and not unfrequently they lead the irreligious to seek in earnest the salvation of their souls.

There is another consideration which will aid us to estimate the value of these publications, though the benefits

which they confer cannot be fully appreciated until disclosed by the light of eternity. It is that they take the place of the silly and worthless books which, half a century ago, were the sources of youthful instruction and amusement, and, we may add, the vehicles of superstition and corruption. Who can estimate the value of a system which not only excludes from the nursery and the parlor such miserable trash as "Tom Thumb" and "Goody Two-Shoes," but substitutes in their place works, the tendency of which is to train the youthful mind for virtue on earth and happiness in heaven?

Such are the *blessings* which the Sabbath-school system seeks to confer; and, great as they are, their value is greatly increased by THE MANNER IN WHICH THEY ARE BESTOWED.

They are conferred principally *upon the young*. This is decidedly the most important and the most cheering feature of the Sabbath-school system. In the morning of life the memory is retentive, the heart is tender, conscience is faithful in its monitions, and prejudices are few and feeble. Impressions are then most easily made; and the principles then inculcated continue through future life to be the most permanent and powerful. Habit, too, is daily increasing its influence for evil or for good—riveting the shackles of sin, or strengthening the golden chain which binds the heart to God. Such is the dictate of human wisdom and experience, which proverbially assert that YOUTH is peculiarly the season of improvement. Inspiration confirms the same truth by *her* declaration, "Train up a child in the way he should go, and when he is old he will not depart from it;" and observation might point us to many a broken-hearted parent, who, when mourning over the wayward depravity of a ruined child, has been heard to exclaim, in bitterness of spirit, "Ah, if I had but restrained him *in youth*, he would *now* have been dutiful and obedient."

This same principle, too, is recognized by the men of

this world, who are too often "wiser in their generation than the children of light." Cataline, when plotting the overthrow of the Roman republic, and the Grecian tyrant, when seeking his country's subjection, sought among *young* men those who might be made the instruments of base and wicked designs; and, in modern times, it has been through *the education of the young* that the Jesuits have swayed the thrones of Europe, and that the Romish church has extended her moral despotism over the nations of the old world. How important then is it, that the friends of the Redeemer should systematically improve the same period to implant the seeds of religious knowledge, to mould the character for eternity, and endeavor to seal the immortal youth as an heir of heaven. This the Sabbath-school aims to do, and thus renders its blessings doubly valuable.

It is another pleasing characteristic of the Sabbath-school system, that *its benefits are bestowed freely.* Hence it is, that many who would feel ashamed to avail themselves of the school-funds set apart "for the education of the poor," and many more who are unable to afford the necessary expense, may, by means of Sabbath-schools, easily secure for their children the inestimable benefits of Christian education. The amount which the system before us thus freely contributes to the instruction of our population, may be to some extent estimated by the fact, that there are in our country not far from 100,000 Sabbath-school teachers, and that their compensation, at thirty-three cents per Sabbath—the rate formerly paid—would every year amount to 3,300,000 dollars; a sum greater by far than is annually distributed by all the school-funds of our land. The place of assembling usually costs nothing, being previously provided for some other purpose. The use of the libraries costs nothing; the teaching, as we have seen, is gratuitous; and the text-books are gratuitously furnished to all who are unable to purchase them. Truly, the Sabbath-school,

like the Gospel, bestows its blessings "without money and without price."

But another interesting trait of the Sabbath-school system is, that its aims *are universal.* Did this institution extend its advantages but to a single city, or a single province, it would deserve our approbation. Did it seek to extend its favors to an entire nation, the moral grandeur of its designs would excite our warmest admiration. But a city, a state, a nation, are not the limit of its operations. No, its "field is the world;" and, by the grace of God, it will never cease its labors, or grow weary in them, till its blessings are showered on the whole human race. All classes, all conditions, are alike the objects of its kind and comprehensive benevolence. Pupils, teachers, parents, and friends, share its benefits. None are so high as to be above its favors; none so low as to be beneath its notice. The system, too, is self-sustaining and expansive. It already numbers upwards of two millions in its connection; and its sacred energies shall never tire, till, to the east and the west, and the north and the south, it can look forth with joy upon an enlightened and regenerated world. Yes, with delight do we anticipate the day—even now its golden rays tinge the summits of the mountains—when these institutions shall become universal; when every city, town, and village shall have a Sabbath-school, from which the voice of prayer and praise shall ascend up and mingle with the voices of angels and glorified spirits, before the throne of God. The system has already extended itself with a rapidity surpassing the highest expectations of its friends, and it will continue to extend till it shall circle the wide earth with its glory—till it beholds *the children of a world,* through its instrumentality, rescued from "indignation and wrath, tribulation and anguish," and prepared for an eternal inheritance of "joy unspeakable and full of glory."

It is a further advantage of the Sabbath-school, that *its instructions are imparted affectionately.* In every well-reg-

ulated Sabbath-school, the teacher rules by the influence of kindness, and the law of love. His pupils *feel* that he is interested in them, and that he earnestly desires and seeks their highest happiness in time and eternity. Hence, they will become deeply attached to him, will confidently seek his counsel, and be guided by his suggestions. Under these circumstances, too, the social feelings will be best cultivated, and the intellectual and moral improvement be incomparably greater than where equal natural capacity is coaxed or driven to the performance of the daily task.

It is still another advantage of Sabbath-schools, that *they are held on the Sabbath*, a day which, if not thus occupied, would in all probability, by many who are now engaged in these schools, be profaned by worldly business, or wasted in idleness and folly. How many children, who otherwise, as formerly, might be seen loitering away the holy Sabbath, now spend its sacred hours in the Sabbath-school and in the study of the word of God. How many teachers and parents are thus led to a proper improvement of the day of rest. And how delightful the thought, that through the influence of Sabbath-schools, that day shall ere long be rescued from long-continued abuse and profanation, and be consecrated to the service of Jehovah; to the acquisition of those truths which exert the most salutary influence on the heart and life, and which make the soul wise unto salvation.

There is a single other feature of the Sabbath-school system too important in its bearings on civil society to pass without notice; and that is, the influence which it exerts *in the prevention of crime.* "Wholesome laws and severe punishments," says an old writer, "are but slow and late ways of reforming the world; the timely and most compendious method of doing this, is by early religious education." The correctness of this principle is abundantly sustained by all sound maxims of civil government; for the grand object of all wise legislation is not so much to punish crime as to

prevent its occurrence. Hence, the means best adapted to prevent the commission of crimes, most effectually promote the great ends of civil government. Now, as a matter of fact, by far the greater portion, probably ninety-nine hundredths of all crimes committed, have their origin in those three great fountains of wickedness, IGNORANCE, SABBATH-BREAKING, and INTEMPERANCE. But who are less likely to grow up in *ignorance* than Sabbath-school scholars? And how many of the five hundred thousand drunkards of our land have been trained up to *intemperance* in Sabbath-schools? And who are so unlikely to violate the sanctity of *the Sabbath* as those who are early and systematically taught to reverence and hallow this holy day? Of all the pupils of the celebrated Robert Raikes, not one was ever convicted of flagrant crime. Of five hundred convicts in one of our prisons recently examined, but three had ever been Sabbath-school scholars. And if all the prisons of our land were thoroughly examined, how many Sabbath-school pupils is it supposed would be found among their eleven thousand wretched and guilty inmates? The number would be very small; and we confidently believe, that if the investigation were made, its results would show that Sabbath-schools, by their *preventive influence*, are doing more for the social and civil order of our country, than all the statute-books, and dungeons, and gibbets of the land.

Such is the SABBATH-SCHOOL system: the simplest, most efficient, most rational, and most valuable system of religious education ever devised—distinguished no less by the *nature* of its blessings, than by the *manner* in which it confers them—subordinately, in various ways, promoting the mental discipline and intellectual culture of its pupils, but seeking, as its chief object, to train them up for the enjoyments and the glories of a holier state of existence. Its blessings, too, are rendered doubly valuable by being bestowed, as they are, in YOUTH, a season so favorable to improvement; AFFECTIONATELY, so as to secure, by the influ-

ence of kindness, the highest benefit of the pupil; FREELY, that the poorest may receive them; UNIVERSALLY, that a world may be their object; and ON THE SABBATH, which is thus redeemed from profanation, and improved in the service of Jehovah.

Great, too, are the incidental advantages of the Sabbath-school system. It exerts a silent, but powerful influence in uniting the hearts of Christians, in furthering other benevolent operations, in leading multitudes to the study of the Bible, in preparing the young to hear the Gospel with intelligence and interest, in preventing vice and the commission of crime, in diffusing intelligence and good order, and in extending a thousand nameless, yet benign and hallowed influences through the whole mass of society. Who can fully estimate these influences, immense, extended, and constantly extending as they are? How often is an important truth mentioned at school, and afterwards repeated at home by the pupil, to reprove the careless sinner, or cheer the desponding Christian. How many teachers, surprised at their own ignorance of the truths which they teach others, have been led to serious reflection, and, through the blessing of the Holy Spirit, to a new life. How many parents and friends, roused by the volume from the Sabbath-school library, or by the remark of a pious child, have been awakened to feel the value of the soul, and to seek that rest which can only be found in believing in Jesus. How many, in short, have, through the instrumentality of Sabbath-schools, been preserved from degradation, and guilt, and woe in this world, and from misery eternal in the world to come. Let Sabbaths rescued from profanation, and churches reared in the wilderness, tell us. Tell us, ye ignorant, instructed; ye profligate, reformed; ye who were once degraded, but have been snatched as "brands from the burning." Tell us, ye teachers, and parents, and friends, who are now rejoicing "in hope of the glory of God," and who trace your first serious impressions to the direct or in-

direct influences of Sabbath-schools. Tell us, ye millions of children saved from vice and early depravity, governed by the law of kindness, instructed in the holy Scriptures, and taught in childhood to lisp the praises of the Prince of peace. Tell us, ye angels who bear to heaven the joyful news of the sinner's repentance, and ye ministering spirits before the throne, who are appointed "to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation."

In this view of the subject, the duty of *all* to sustain the Sabbath-school cause, and to extend its benefits as widely as possible by their *influence*, their *efforts*, their *contributions*, and their *prayers*, is made obvious. To the PHILANTHROPIST, it promises the melioration of the condition of all mankind, and their elevation in intelligence, social enjoyment, and personal happiness. To the PATRIOT, it affords the surest pledge of the permanence of those political and civil institutions which we so much prize, and the only secure foundation of which is individual and national virtue. To the CHRISTIAN, it comes as the agent and pioneer of the Gospel, and he should welcome it with mingled gratitude and joy, as the harbinger of boundless blessings to the church of God.

To all, then, but to the *Christian especially*, does it belong to cherish and extend the Sabbath-school system; for probably in no other way can he do more to quicken the flight of that angel who has the everlasting Gospel to preach to every creature—to promote the cause of Christ by the conversion of his fellow-men—to cause the solitary place to breathe forth the notes of joy and gladness, and the wilderness to rejoice and blossom as the rose—to make our whole land IMMANUEL'S land, and the wide world a blooming garden of God. Labor, then, fellow-Christian, *in this cause*, to gain the high honor of turning many to righteousness, that when the assembled universe shall rise in judgment, you may find, among the millions of the redeemed, multitudes saved through the instrumentality of *Sabbath-schools*

which you aided to establish, who shall shine for ever as the brightness of the firmament, and with whom you may for ever praise and adore the riches of redeeming grace.

NOTE—A premium, offered by a friend of Sabbath-schools, was awarded to the author of this Tract.

INFLUENCE OF SABBATH-SCHOOLS.

Sabbath-schools prevent the desecration of the Sabbath. Every intelligent man must acknowledge the importance of observing this day to keep it holy. Abolish the Sabbath, the Bible and all other moral influences at once fade away: as the Sabbath is observed or neglected, so will the principles and doctrines of religion be honored or despised. Of this truth, we have most lamentable demonstrations in many of our cities and towns, especially our seaports. This day being neglected, God's name is wantonly profaned, and all his labors set at naught. Just in proportion as this day is disregarded, will the knowledge and worship of Jehovah escape from the mind, the moral sense of the community be impaired, its powers decay, its foundations fail, and its pillars totter and fall. In the light of these truths, is it not an important consideration, that Sabbath-schools prevent thousands of children and youth from Sabbath desecration? They gather those who would otherwise be loitering about the streets, wandering in the fields, and revelling in dissipation, and impress their young minds with reverence for God's sacred day. This was one of the primary objects in the mind of Robert Raikes, their founder. He saw the overwhelming evils of this crying sin; the Sabbath-breaker is prepared for almost any step in crime. By reference to the history of criminals, we find that nine-tenths regard Sabbath-breaking as a fatal step in their mad career. Reverence for the Sabbath being destroyed, moral principle is

almost extinct. Who then can compute the good effected by Sabbath-schools, in preventing the violation of the fourth commandment.

Sabbath-schools bring children under the convicting and converting influences of the Gospel. Here the Bible is carefully read, and accurately studied: its precepts and invitations, its warnings and threatenings, are all intelligently, familiarly, and affectionately explained and applied. Here are imparted all the fundamental principles of our holy religion; children are solemnly impressed with the fact of the existence of a God—their relations to him as their Creator, Preserver, and bountiful Benefactor, and their obligations growing out of these relations; they are taught that they are sinners lost and ruined—that God has had compassion on our race, and given his dear Son to die for our redemption—that Jesus Christ was God manifest in the flesh—that he lived here on earth as we, although without sin—wrought many most astonishing and benevolent miracles, such as healing the sick, and even raising the dead—that he was persecuted, insulted, and scourged—was basely traduced, and finally suffered and died upon the cross, as a sacrifice for sin. They are told the wonderful phenomena attending the crucifixion, all establishing the reality and truth of our glorious Christianity. They are taught the terms of salvation, repentance towards God and faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. The exercises are accompanied with the enlivening, animating, and subduing power of prayer and praise. Such is the system of Sunday-school instruction. No wonder that a great majority of those converted at the present day, are or have been connected with Sunday-schools. That children are capable of understanding the Gospel at a very early age cannot be disputed: numerous facts are in point. The instructions and impressions which resulted in John Newton's conversion were received from his mother, who died before he was four years of age. A celebrated female

writer says she distinctly recollects consultations held in her own mind in view of the claims of the Gospel, while only three years of age. Thus we see the practicability and advantages of *early religious education.* To this source may be traced the distinguished piety and usefulness of Samuel, Timothy, St. Augustine, Hooker, Wesley, Dwight, Gardiner, Doddridge, and a host of other illustrious names.

Sabbath-schools exert a powerful moral influence upon parents. Parents become interested in the cause almost necessarily. Their children repeat in their presence what they have learned at school, and hear it they must. Soon their feelings are awakened—curiosity is excited, and perchance they accompany their little ones to the school. Here their *hearts are enlisted,* and from the school they proceed to the sanctuary. Thus are they brought to sit under the charming sound of Gospel truth, and frequently to feel its saving power. In assisting children to learn their lessons, and in reading the Bible and other books they use, many have been led to reflection and repentance. Teachers, too, while visiting their scholars, have full access to the parents, and by conversing with them upon the solemn interests of their souls, are often the means of their salvation. Thus, through the indirect agency of Sunday-schools, thousands of fathers and mothers have been benefited; many have been raised from ignorance to intelligence, many from vice to virtue, many from the dominion of Satan to the service of God.

THE LOST SOUL.

Soon as the physician announced that her complaint was beyond the reach of medicine, and that she could not live, all hope forsook her. Her anticipations of worldly enjoyment fled. Her thoughts descended into the depths of eternity. "*I did not think I should die so soon—I have lost my soul,*" was the language which escaped, in a moaning tone, with every shortening breath, until, in a few hours, the scene closed for ever. In vain did her anxious friends and her minister proclaim a free pardon through the blood and righteousness of the Saviour, if she would surrender her heart to him; her mind could not be diverted for a moment from the one all-absorbing theme: "*I did not think I should die so soon—I have lost my soul!*"

Poor Ann ——, the closing scene of whose life is here *truly,* though imperfectly described, had pious friends. From Sabbath to Sabbath the Gospel had been constantly and faithfully preached to her; she had lived through several revivals of religion; had once and again been moved in view of her danger as a sinner, exposed to the wrath of God, and as often had relapsed into stupidity.

Thus sixteen years passed away under the sunshine of religious privileges, accompanied, at times, with the strivings of God's Holy Spirit. Now the season of reckoning was come. She was arrested by a disease which, in a short time, was pronounced incurable.

> "O death, how dreadful must thy summons be
> To him that is at ease!"

Is there not distressing reason to fear that Ann's apprehensions were too well grounded? In her death, then, behold a solemn attestation to the following truths.

The soul may be lost. Multitudes, who in the time of health and prosperity could trifle, perhaps, with the threatenings of the Bible, have left, in the honest hour of death, a similar testimony. Like Ann, they have shuddered in prospect of their doom. The representations of the word

of God have pressed upon the conscience with the weight of mountains—have pierced the heart with the anguish of barbed arrows. In such circumstances, human strength and courage wither away under the question, "What is a man profited, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul?" Now, the soul is seen in its true, intrinsic value—

> "——the thing of greatest price
> The whole creation round."

O how much is meant by the short expression, uttered by a dying sinner, "*I have lost my soul!*"

In the history of Ann we may perceive, that *great privileges, if misimproved, do not prevent the loss of the soul.* What more could have been done for her than was done? Reader, you may have an abundance of the good things of this world; nay, you may have pious parents and praying friends; may be a regular attendant on the preached word; and at times, under the strivings of God's Spirit, may feel that an interest in Christ is the one thing needful; and, after all, may come unprepared to your death-bed. "A little more sleep, a little more slumber"—so shall eternal "poverty" overtake thee "as an armed man." Amid the wailings in hell is heard the lamentation, "How have I hated instruction and despised reproof!" "If I had not come and spoken unto them," says Christ, "they had not had sin; but now they have no cloak for their sin." To the rich man in the parable it was said, "Remember that thou in thy lifetime receivedst thy good things;" "but" *now* "thou art tormented."

Conscious security will not prevent the loss of the soul. Ann never felt more safe than the moment before she was seized by her mortal malady. In her estimation the evil hour was far away; while, in fact, the Judge was "standing at the door." "When they shall say, Peace and safety, then sudden destruction cometh." "Soul, thou hast much goods laid up for many years," said one. "Thou fool," said God, "this night thy soul shall be required of thee." O plead not, as the evidence of safety, *that* stupidity which, unless removed, insures your ruin. Sinners often dance, and jest, and laugh, on the brink of everlasting woe. To-night, they eat and drink, and are merry—to-morrow, their

souls are lost for ever. Reader, thou knowest not what a day may bring forth.

From Ann we also learn, that *an amiable temper and external morality will not prevent the loss of the soul.* She had these, but what did they avail her? While such as persevere in vicious courses will surely perish, it is equally certain that, as a basis of justification in the sight of God, a blameless moral life is altogether inadequate. It is a bed too short to stretch ourselves upon, a garment too narrow to cover us. Men often imagine, in their blindness, that they are too good to become eternal associates for the reprobates in hell; but let the commandment come, and their thoughts, feelings, and pursuits be brought to the test of God's law, and they soon discover themselves to be "the chief of sinners." A self-justifying spirit is the greatest obstacle in the way to salvation. Christ is the Saviour of such only as *feel themselves to be undone.* "He came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance." Often do men go on, flattering themselves in their own eyes, until eternity discloses their real character, and their souls are lost. "Except a man be *born again,* he cannot see the kingdom of God."

To lose the soul is an evil inexpressible and inconceivable. O wretched state!—to bid an eternal farewell to the Bible, to the house of God, to the sacramental table, to the invitations of mercy, to MERCY itself; to heaven, to angels, to saints, to God, and to Christ; to love, to peace, to hope, to all enjoyment, corporeal, mental, and spiritual; to become a companion of devils and damned spirits, and a prey to endless remorse. Unhappy Ann! no wonder the cold drops stood on her brow as she exclaimed, "*I have lost my soul!*" Reader, are you prepared to encounter this mighty, eternal struggle of unutterable, agonized feeling? God grant that you may never know by experience the import of the expression—*a lost soul.* O eternity! "One night," says Saurin, "passed in a burning fever, or in struggling in the waves of the sea, between life and death, appears of immense length; it seems to the sufferer as if the sun had forgot its course, and as if the laws of nature itself were subverted. What, then, will be the state of those miserable victims of divine displeasure who, after they shall have passed through *millions of millions* of ages, will be obliged

to make this overwhelming reflection: 'All this is only an atom of our misery!' What will their despair be when they shall be forced to say to themselves, 'Again we must revolve through these enormous periods; again we must suffer a privation of celestial happiness—devouring flames again—cruel remorse again—crimes and blasphemies over and over again—for ever! for ever!'"

Said the rich man in hell, "I have five brethren—send Lazarus to testify unto them, lest they also come to this place of torment." Does not Ann herself, in the incident of her death, appeal to us from the *eternal world?* I seem to hear her say,

"Reader, be it your first concern to secure the salvation of your soul. The least delay may be followed by fatal, irretrievable consequences. *Take warning from me.* God has been at immense expense to prevent your ruin. Bethlehem, Gethsemane, and Calvary, cry out upon you, '*Why will you die?*' 'The Spirit and the bride say, *Come:* let him that heareth, say, *Come.*' You *may* be saved. After so many abused privileges and misspent years, still *you* may be saved. Harden not your heart. Throw yourself upon the mercy of God in Christ.

'While God invites, how blest the day,
How sweet the Gospel's charming sound!
Come, sinner, haste, O haste away,
While yet a pard'ning God is found.'

Soon your day of grace may terminate, suddenly, unexpectedly, for ever. *Take warning from me!* To-morrow's sun, as it gilds the eastern heavens, may bring no light to you; for your probationary sun may have set in eternity. Then, dying in impenitence, the lamentation will be *yours,* 'The harvest is past, the summer is ended, and I am not saved.' I HAVE LOST MY SOUL. *Take warning from me!* Oh, I have lost—I have lost my soul!"

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THE

SCOTSMAN'S FIRESIDE.

AN AUTHENTIC NARRATIVE

"From scenes like these old Scotia's grandeur springs,
That makes her lov'd at home, rever'd abroad."

In the year 1805, during the prevalence of the yellow-fever in New York, the late Mr. B—— resided a few miles from that city.

On his return one evening to the domestic circle, which then consisted of his wife and four children, and his venerable mother-in-law, the late Mrs. ——, he said to Mrs. B——, "My dear, I fear I have done what will not please you."

Mrs. B——. "What is that?"

Mr. B——. "I have met with an old school-fellow and countryman, and invited him to stay with us while the fever prevails."

Mrs. B——. "And why should I be displeased with that?"

Mr. B——. "Because I know that he and you will not agree in *politics*."

Mrs. B——. "O, if that be all, we will avoid the subject."

Mr. B——. "But there is another subject on which you will be still more at variance. Mr. M—— has not only imbibed French principles in politics, but also on the subject of *religion*. He is an infidel."

Mrs. B——. "That, indeed, is bad. How shall we please him, and yet observe the religious duties incumbent on us as a Christian family?"

Mr. B——. "My dear, we must not omit one of them, and you must help me. When the hour for family worship arrives, you will call the family together, and we will do our duty as usual. Mr. M—— is a gentleman, and however he may be opposed to religion, his politeness will, at least, prevent him from ridiculing it."

In the course of the evening Mr. M—— arrived, and a few hours were spent in pleasant conversation, and recollections of the "land of the mountain and the flood"—the scenes of early life.

At the hour of nine Mrs. B—— rung the bell three times, the usual signal for calling the family together; and turning to the guest, said, "Mr. M——, we keep up the good old Scotch custom of family worship; I hope you have no objection to unite with us."

"Certainly not, madam," was his reply; "I hope I may not, in the least, interfere with your domestic arrangements."

The family assembled.

——————With serious face,
They round the ingle* form a circle wide:
The sire turns o'er, with patriarchal grace,
The big hall Bible, once his father's pride;
Those strains that once did sweet in Zion glide,
He wales† a portion with judicious care,
And, "Let us worship God," he says, with solemn air.

They chant their artless notes with simple guise;
They tune their hearts, by far the noblest aim:
Perhaps *Dundee's* wild warbling measures rise,
Or plaintive *Martyrs'*, worthy of the name.

* Fireside. † Selects.

The priest-like father reads the sacred page:
Perhaps the *Christian volume* is the theme;
How guiltless blood for guilty man was shed;
How he, who bare in heaven the second name,
Had not, on earth, whereon to lay his head.

Then kneeling down, to heaven's eternal King
The saint, the father, and the husband prays:
Hope springs exulting on triumphant wing,
That thus they all shall meet in future days;
There, ever bask in uncreated rays,
No more to sigh, or shed the bitter tear;
Together hymning their Creator's praise
In such society, yet still more dear,
While circling time moves round in an eternal sphere.

Cotter's Saturday Night.

Mr. M—— knelt with the family, and on rising, observed to Mrs. B—— that he had not bent his knee in the same manner for ten years. This led to serious conversation between him and Mrs. Graham, which was continued to a late hour; he, of course, arguing against revealed religion.

Next day, and every day, the subject was renewed, with much pleasantry and politeness on his part, and great forbearance on the part of those whose minds the Spirit of God had enlightened. Instead of saying, "Stand by thyself, I am holier than thou," they often said to each other, "Who maketh us to differ?" and united in private prayer that God would look in compassion on their guest, and bless their conversation to awaken him to a sense of his sin and danger.

One day, while conversing with Mrs. Graham, he remarked, "I have travelled through many countries, and have seen many families, but never, till now, have I witnessed such perfect happiness."

"Perhaps, sir," said the aged saint, "you never were with those who had an assured hope of an interest in Christ, and that, through his atonement, 'all things shall work together for their good,' both in time and eternity."

"No, indeed I have not, since I left the parental roof."

One of the children, a lovely girl about two years old, was his particular favorite, and he often walked the garden with her in his arms, entertaining her with Scottish melody.

When the fever had subsided, Mr. M—— returned to W——, where he resided, to arrange his business previous to going to the West Indies to visit his brothers, with a view to procure aid towards embarking in the mercantile line. In the mean time it pleased God to remove by death the lovely olive-plant who had so often shared in his attentions.

On his return to New York, Mr. B—— could scarcely persuade him to visit the family, as he feared that Mrs. B——'s sorrows, on seeing him, would be renewed. He, however, was prevailed on, and again and again religion became the subject of conversation.

As Mr. M—— had recently been deprived of an office under government, his pecuniary means were slender, which caused Mr. and Mrs. B—— to add to his sea-stores such comforts as in those days were not furnished to ship passengers; and each determined to add provision for the soul as well as the body. Mrs. B—— put up a small pocket-Bible, with references in the blank leaf to appropriate texts; Mrs. Graham added "The Rise and Progress of Religion in the Soul;" and Mr. B——, "The Refuge," with a long letter, superscribed, "*Not to be opened till out at sea.*"

Many months elapsed before the family heard from Mr. M——, but he was often remembered at the throne of grace, and his three friends derived some consolation from the recollection that, during his last visit, he had appeared more serious, and had courted religious conversation. At length Mr. B—— received a letter from Mr. M——, dated at G——, at the close of which he remarked that he never expected to be as happy as they, for his past life had been spent in such a way as to deprive him of all hopes of ever enjoying the favor of God.

But we will let Mr. M—— tell his own story. Two years after that period, he was again a visitor in that parlor where, for the first time in ten years, he bowed the knee. He then related to a dear departed Christian friend and Mrs. B——, the way in which the Lord had led him, until he found "peace in believing." His account was substantially as follows:

"There," said he, pointing with his finger, "there, on that spot, I bowed the knee in complaisance to man, while my heart was filled with enmity against God; and O, the long-suffering and compassion of that God, who of such a

rebel has made a child of grace. The moment I found myself on my knees, early associations crowded on my mind; I did not hear a word of Mr. B——'s prayer, for I was immediately, in idea, transported back to similar scenes under my father's roof.

"I arose from my knees as if waking from a dream; and from that hour I have found myself often mentally asking the question, 'If the Bible, after all, should be true, what must become of me?'

"When it pleased God to remove by death your lovely R——, I was filled with anger. 'Is this the God so often extolled for his mercy and justice?' I said with myself; 'does he thus reward those who faithfully serve him?' I felt that I could have torn him from his throne; and when I visited the city a few weeks after, I feared to call on you, lest the presence of one who so fondly loved your darling, should renew your grief; but Mr. B—— insisted, saying, 'Go, my friend, and see the consolation religion affords in time of trouble.'

"Every time I visited you, and conversed with Mrs. Graham, I felt that there must be some source from which Christians derive happiness, of which I was ignorant. I did not avoid religious conversation, and generally left your family with a painful feeling that all my golden expectations of happiness connected with 'liberty and equality,' and man's perfectability, must soon pass away; and that I must yield the palm of discovery to those whom I had often made the jest of revelry, and let that volume which I had considered only as 'old wives' fables,' take the place of infidel writers. 'Miserable comforters' I had found them all. Still, however, I felt irresolute as to my future conduct.

"When at sea, I read Mr. B——'s letter, and looked into the books that accompanied it. Every word I read condemned me; and I saw that I was a wretched, guilty sinner, at the mercy of an offended God. But to become religious would mar my worldly prospects. I feared 'the world's dread laugh,' when again I should meet my former associates. I had no time to retrace my steps, and I therefore continued in the same course. I took the letter and books, and pushing them out of sight at the bottom of my trunk, I determined to banish all thoughts of religion from my mind.

"I succeeded in my object in the West Indies, and returned to W——, from which place I wrote to Mr. B——, to inform him of my plans. Before closing my letter, I thought 'I must add something on the subject of religion, to please those good people, who are certainly the kindest enthusiasts* I ever knew.'

"What I said called forth another letter from Mr. B——. He did not suspect my hypocrisy, but viewed me as one convinced of sin, and anxious to know what I should 'do to be saved.' He advised me to procure Saurin's Sermons, and read that 'On the Compassion of God.' But it was far from my intention to comply with his request; and only that part of his letter that related to worldly prospects was attended to. I continued to associate with the gay, carefully concealing the fearful doubts and forebodings which often haunted my mind while partaking in their revels.

"Shortly after, I made one of a party to attend a grand ball at A——. We dined at a tavern, and the glass circulated till the festive scene of the evening commenced. The exciting influence of dancing, added to that of wine, caused me to fly rather than dance, and by some means to me unaccountable, I fell and broke my arm. A young physician, one of the party, set it; and while the gay revellers returned to their homes, I was carried to the upper story of the building, where I passed a sleepless night, under the excitement of fever, aggravated by an alarmed and awakened conscience.

"Again early associations recurred to my mind, especially the slighted admonitions of a pious mother, blended with the remembrance of her soothing attentions in childhood, when laid on a sick bed. And 'O, that I knew where I could find that God whose consolations she and my New York friends enjoy in time of trial!' was my earnest cry.

"My arm not being properly set, had again to be broken and reset, which made my confinement much longer than it would otherwise have been. I sent for Saurin's Sermons, and found consolation in reading the sermon recommended by Mr. B——. I carefully read Doddridge's Rise and Progress, every word of which seemed to accord with the

* Perhaps the epithet *enthusiast* grated on his mind, like *coward* on that of the duellist, and hushed the "still small voice of conscience."

state of my mind. I opened my long-neglected Bible. I saw that I was ruined by sin; justly condemned; and that there was no salvation except 'through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus,' in whom God could be 'just, and the justifier of him that believeth.' Into the arms of that Redeemer I was enabled to throw myself. I left my room, humbly trusting I had an advocate with my offended Father, in Christ Jesus; and cordially relying on his righteousness, I was freed from the awful dread of a judgment to come.

"I returned to W——, determined to break off from the world and my former associates; and now, 'clothed and in my right mind,' never to quit the feet of Jesus.

"A few weeks after, hearing that the communion was to be dispensed at A——, I resolved that the scene of my former folly should first witness my deep repentance, and my humble trust in that Saviour I had so long rejected. There I publicly devoted myself to him, and partook of the symbols of the broken body and shed blood of him 'who loved me, and gave himself for me.'

"And now, my friends, will you not help me to bless and magnify the name of God, who thus took me from 'the horrible pit' of infidelity, and 'the miry clay' of worldliness and sin, and set my feet upon the 'Rock of ages?'"

Mr. M——, during the whole of his subsequent life, proved his faith by his works. Prayer-meetings, Sabbath-schools, plans for ameliorating the condition of the poor, and all the benevolent objects of the day, shared his attention. He became an officer in the church, and by his philanthropy obtained the name of the Howard of G——n.

His constitution, never very robust, gave way about the age of forty, when he departed in peace.

Two of his three friends have since joined him—he who, like Abraham, "commanded his children and his household after him;" and the mother in Israel, who saw her children's children following her steps, and "who, being dead, yet speaketh."

Reader, hast thou, like the subject of this narrative, *imbibed infidel principles;* does the Bible—if, indeed, thou hast one—lie unopened; do thy knees never bend to the God who made thee? Be instructed by the history of Mr. M——, and weary not thyself seeking happiness where

thou seest he never found it. Take down thy long-neglected Bible. Turn to Psalm 14 : 1, and read the character of him who "hath said in his heart, *There is no God.*" Then turn to those precious words, Isaiah 55 : 6, 7, "Seek ye the Lord while he may be found; call ye upon him while he is near. Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts; and let him return unto the Lord, and he will have mercy upon him; and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon."

Is the reader *poor?* And dost thou think thou hast no time to read thy Bible or to attend to the interests of thy soul? Turn to Psalm 127 : 1, 2, and thou wilt see that without the blessing of God, "it is in vain for thee to rise up early, to sit up late, and to eat the bread of sorrows." Then turn to Matthew 6 : 33, and immediately comply with thy Saviour's command: "Seek ye first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things shall be added unto you."

Are these pages read by a fireside like that above described; where the morning and evening worship are like a foundation and a covering to the dwelling? Let the value of early religious impressions, illustrated in this narrative, incite parents and guardians, not only to be faithful to their own households, but by every practicable method to promote the religious improvement of all the rising generation—contributing to Sabbath and infant-schools, and all charities for the ignorant and destitute, *time*, *talents*, and *substance*, according as the Lord hath given them.

Let this narrative also encourage the friends of the Redeemer to be faithful to those who may seem farthest from the kingdom of God. Let them remember in their prayers and their kind Christian endeavors, the *rich*, the *infidel*, the *gay*, and the *proud*. On all suitable occasions, and in a proper manner, let the truths of the Gospel be pressed even on *their* hearts; and let them be exemplified and commended, by a uniformly meek, consistent, and Godly example.

Reader, whoever you are, while you reject the Gospel, you "spend money for that which is not bread, and your labor for that which satisfieth not." Hear, then, and accept the invitation, Isaiah 55 : 1, "Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters; and he that hath no money, come ye; yea, come, buy wine and milk, without money and without price."

No. 275.

THE AMIABLE LOUISA.

FROM "THE YOUNG CHRISTIAN."

The circumstances related in the following narrative are of recent occurrence, and the reader may rely upon the strict truth and faithfulness of the description.

Shortly after my settlement in the ministry, I observed in the congregation a young lady whose blooming countenance and cheerful air showed perfect health and high elation of spirits. Her appearance satisfied me at once that she was amiable and thoughtless. There was no one of my charge whose prospects for long life were more promising than her own, and perhaps no one who looked forward to the future with more pleasing hopes of enjoyment. To her eye the world seemed bright. She often said she wished to enjoy more of it before she became a Christian.

Louisa—for by that name I shall call her—manifested no particular hostility to religion, but wished to live a gay and merry life till just before her death, and then to become pious and die happy. She was constant in her attendance at church, and while others seemed moved by the exhibition of the Saviour's love, she seemed entirely unaffected. Upon whatever subject I preached, her countenance retained the same marks of indifference and unconcern. The same easy smile played upon her features, whether sin or death, or heaven or hell, was the theme of discourse. One evening I invited a few of the young ladies of my society to meet at my house. She came with her companions. I had sought the interview with them, that I might more directly urge upon them the importance of religion. All in the room were affected—and she, though evidently moved, endeavored to conceal her feelings.

The interest in this great subject manifested by those present was such, that I informed them that I would meet, in a week from that time, any who wished for personal conversation. The appointed evening arrived, and I was de-

lighted in seeing, with two or three others, Louisa enter my house.

I conversed with each one individually. They generally, with much frankness, expressed their state of feeling. Most of them expressed much solicitude respecting their eternal interests. Louisa appeared different from all the rest. She was anxious and unable to conceal her anxiety, and yet ashamed to have it known. She had come to converse with me upon the subject of religion, and yet was making an evident effort to appear indifferent. I had long felt interested in Louisa, and was glad of this opportunity to converse with her.

"Louisa," said I, "I am happy to see you here this evening, and particularly so, as you have become interested in the subject of religion."

She made no reply.

"Have you been long thinking upon this subject, Louisa?"

"I always thought the subject important, sir, but have not attended to it as I suppose I ought."

"Do you *now* feel the subject to be more important than you have previously?"

"I don't know, sir; I think I want to be a Christian."

"Do you *feel* that you are a sinner, Louisa?"

"I *know* that I am a sinner, for the Bible says so, but I suppose that I do not feel it enough."

"Can you expect that God will receive you into his favor while you are in such a state of mind? He has made you, and he is now taking care of you, giving you every blessing and every enjoyment you have, and yet you have lived many years without any gratitude to him, and continually breaking his commandments, and now do not *feel* that you are a sinner. What would you think of a child whose kind and affectionate parents had done every thing in their power to make her happy, and who should yet not feel that she had done any thing wrong, though she had been every day disobeying her parents, and had never expressed any gratitude for their kindness. You, Louisa, would abhor such a child. And yet this is the way you have been treating your heavenly Father, and he has heard you say this evening that you do not feel that you have done wrong, and he sees your heart, and knows how unfeeling it is. Now,

Louisa, you must be lost, unless you repent of your sins, and ask humbly, and earnestly, for forgiveness. And why will you not? You know that Christ has died to atone for sin, and that God will forgive you for his Son's sake if you trust in him."

To this Louisa made no reply. She did not seem displeased, neither did her feelings appear subdued.

After addressing a few general remarks to my young friends, we kneeled in prayer, and the interview closed. Another meeting was appointed on the same evening of the succeeding week. Louisa again made her appearance with the same young ladies and a few others. She appeared much more deeply impressed. Her coldness and reserve had given place to a frank expression of interest and exhibition of feeling.

"Well, Louisa," said I, as in turn I commenced conversing with her, "I was almost afraid I should not see you here this evening."

"I feel, sir," said she, "that it is time for me to attend to my immortal soul. I have neglected it too long."

"Do you *feel* that you are a sinner, Louisa?"

"Yes, sir, I do."

"Do you think, Louisa, you have any claim upon God to forgive you?"

"No, sir. It would be just in God to leave me to perish. I think I want to repent, but I cannot. I want to love God, but do not know how I can."

"Do you remember, Louisa, that Christ has said, 'Whosoever he be of you that forsaketh not all that he hath, he cannot be my disciple?'"

"Yes, sir."

"Well, Louisa, now count the cost; are you ready to give up all for Christ? Are you ready to turn from your gay companions, and lay aside your frivolous pleasures, and acknowledge the Saviour publicly, and be derided, as perhaps you will be, by your former friends, and live a life of prayer and of effort to do good?"

She hesitated for a moment, and then replied, "I am afraid not."

"Well, Louisa, the terms of acceptance with God are plain, and there is no altering them. You cannot serve God and mammon. If you would be a Christian, you must

renounce all sin, and with a broken heart surrender yourself entirely to the Saviour."

This evening's interview closed as before, and a similar appointment was made for the next week. Some of the young ladies present, I had reason to believe, had accepted the terms of salvation. The next week about the same number were present, but Louisa was not with them; a slight cold had detained her. But the week after she again appeared. To my great disappointment I found her interest diminishing. Though not exhibiting that cold reserve which she at first manifested, she seemed far less anxious than at our last interview—the Spirit was grieved away. This was the last time she called to see me; but alas, I was soon called to see her, under circumstances which, at that time, were but little anticipated. These social meetings continued for some time, and many of Louisa's associates, I have cause to hope, became the disciples of Jesus.

Two or three months passed away, and my various duties so far engrossed my mind that my particular interest in Louisa's spiritual welfare had given place to other solicitudes; when one day as I was riding out, making parochial visits, one of my parishioners informed me that she was quite unwell, and desired to see me. In a few moments I was in her sick chamber. She had taken a violent cold, and it had settled into a fever. She was lying in her bed, her cheek glowing with the feverish hue, and her lips parched with thirst. She seemed agitated when I entered the room, and the moment I stood by her bedside and inquired how she did, she covered her face with both hands and burst into a flood of tears.

Her sister, who was by her bedside, immediately turned to me and said, "Sir, she is in great distress of mind. Mental agony has kept her awake nearly all night. She has wanted very much to see you, that you might converse with her."

I was fearful that the agitation of her feelings might seriously injure her health, and did all I consistently could to soothe and quiet her.

"But, sir," said Louisa, "I am sick, and may die; I know that I am not a Christian, and Oh, if I die in this state of mind, what will become of me? What will become of me?" and she again burst into tears.

What could I say? Every word she said was true. Her eyes were opened to her danger. There was cause for alarm. Sickness was upon her. Delirium might soon ensue; death might be very near; and her soul was unprepared to appear before God. She saw it all; she *felt* it all. Fever was burning in her veins. But she forgot her pain in view of the terrors of approaching judgment.

I told her that the Lord was merciful and ready to pardon; that he had given his Son to die for sinners; and was more ready to forgive than we to ask forgiveness.

"But, sir," said she, "I have known my duty long, and have not done it. I have been ashamed of my Saviour, and grieved away the Spirit; and now I am upon a sick bed, and perhaps must die. Oh, if I were but a Christian I should be willing to die."

I told her of the Saviour's love. I pointed to many of God's precious promises to the penitent. I endeavored to induce her to resign her soul calmly to the Saviour. But all was unavailing. Trembling and agitated, she was looking forward to the dark future. The Spirit of the Lord had opened her eyes, and through her own reflections had led her into this state of alarm. I knelt by her bedside and fervently prayed that the Holy Spirit would guide her to the truth, and that the Saviour would speak peace to her troubled soul. O could they who are postponing repentance to a sick-bed have witnessed the suffering of this once merry girl, they would shudder at the thought of trusting to a dying hour. How poor a time to prepare to meet God, when the mind is enfeebled, when the body is restless or racked with pain, and when mental agitation frustrates the skill of the physician. Yet so it is. One half the world are postponing repentance to a dying bed. And when sickness comes, the very circumstance of being unprepared hurries the miserable victim to the grave.

The next day I called again to see Louisa. Her fever was still raging, and its fires were fanned by mental suffering. Poor girl! thought I, as the first glance of her countenance showed the strong lineaments of despair. I needed not to ask how she felt. Her countenance told her feelings. And I knew that while her mind was in this state, restoration to health was out of the question.

"And can you not, Louisa," said I, "trust your soul

with the Saviour who died for you? He has said, 'Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.'"

"Oh, sir, I know the Saviour is merciful, but somehow or other I cannot go to him, I know not why—Oh, I am miserable indeed."

"Do you think, Louisa, that you are penitent for sin? If you are, you are forgiven; for God who gave his Son to die for us, is more ready to pardon than we to ask forgiveness. He is more ready to give good gifts to the penitent than any earthly parent to give bread to his hungry child."

I then opened the Bible at the 15th chapter of Luke, and read the parable of the prodigal son. I particularly directed her attention to the 20th verse: "When he was yet a great way off his father saw him, and had compassion, and ran, and fell upon his neck, and kissed him."

"Oh, sir," said she, "none of these promises are for me. I find no peace to my troubled spirit. I have long been sinning against God, and now he is summoning me to render up my account; and Oh, what an account have I to render! The doctor gives me medicine, but I feel that it does no good, for I can think of nothing but my poor soul. Even if I were perfectly well, I could hardly endure the view which God has given me of my sins. If they were forgiven how happy should I be! but now—Oh!"—her voice was stopped by a fit of shuddering, which agitated those around her with the fear that she might be dying. Soon, however, her nerves were more quiet, and I kneeled to commend her spirit to the Lord.

As I rode home, her despairing countenance was unceasingly before me. Her lamentations, her mournful groans were continually crying in my ears. As I kneeled with my family at evening, I bore Louisa upon my heart to the throne of grace. All night I was restlessly upon my pillow dreaming of unavailing efforts at this sick-bed.

Another morning came. As I knocked at the door of her dwelling I felt a most painful solicitude as to the answer I might receive.

"How is Louisa this morning?" said I to the person who opened the door.

"She is fast failing, sir, and the doctor thinks she can-

not recover. We have just sent for her friends to come and see her before she dies."

"Is her mind more composed than it has been?"

"O no, sir. She has had a dreadful night. She says that she is lost, and that there is no hope for her."

I went into her chamber. Despair was pictured more deeply than ever upon her flushed and fevered countenance. I was surprised at the strength she still manifested as she tossed from side to side. Death was evidently drawing near. She knew it. She had lived without God, and felt that she was unprepared to stand before him. A few of her young friends were standing by her bedside. She warned them in the most affecting terms to prepare for death while in health. She told them of the mental agony she was then enduring, and of the heavier woes which were thickly scattered through that endless career she was about to enter. All her conversation was interspersed with the most heart-rending exclamations of despair. She said she knew that God was ready to forgive the sincerely penitent, but that her sorrow was not sorrow for sin, but dread of its awful penalty.

I had already said all that I could to lead her to the Saviour—but no Saviour cast his love on this dying bed—no ray of peace cheered the departing soul. Youth and beauty were struggling with death; and as that eye which but a few days before had sparkled with gayety, now gazed on eternity, it was fixed in an expression of despair.

> "By many a death-bed I had been,
> And many a sinner's parting seen,
> But never aught like this."

There was nothing that could be said. The moanings of the sufferer mingled with the prayer, which was almost inarticulately uttered, from the emotions which the scene inspired.

Late in the afternoon I called again. But her reason was gone, and in restless agony she was grappling with death. Her friends were standing around her, but she did not recognize them. Every eye in the room was filled with tears, but poor Louisa saw not, and heeded not their weeping. It was a scene which neither pen nor pencil can portray. At the present moment that chamber of death is as

vividly present to my mind as it was when I looked upon it through irrepressible tears. I can now see the disorder of the dying bed—the restless form—the swollen veins—the hectic burning cheek—the eyes rolling wildly around the room—and the weeping friends. Who can describe such a scene? And who can imagine the emotions which one must feel who knew her history, and who knew that this delirium succeeded temporal, and perhaps preceded eternal despair? Louisa could no longer listen to my prayers; she could no longer receive the precious instructions of God's word. And what could be said to console her friends? Nothing. "Be still, and know that I am God," was all that could be said. I could only look and listen with reverence, inwardly praying that the sad spectacle might not be lost upon any of us. For some time I lingered around the solemn scene in silence. Not a word was spoken. All knew that death was near. The friends who were most deeply affected struggled hard to restrain the audible expression of grief. In silence I had entered the room, and in silence and sadness I went away.

Early the next morning I called at the door to inquire for Louisa.

"She is dead, sir," was the reply to my question.

"At what time did she die?"

"About midnight, sir."

"Was her reason restored before her death?"

"It appeared partially to return a few moments before she breathed her last, but she was almost gone, and we could hardly understand what she said."

"Did she seem any more peaceful in her mind?"

"Her friends thought, sir, that she did express a willingness to depart, but she was so weak and so far gone that it was impossible for her to express her mind with any clearness."

This is all that can be said of the eternal prospects of one who "*wished to live a gay and merry life till just before death, and then to become pious, and die happy.*" Reader,

"Be wise TO-DAY—'tis madness to defer."

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BIBLE ARGUMENT

FOR

TEMPERANCE.

BY REV. AUSTIN DICKINSON.

The Bible requires us to "present our bodies a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable unto God;" to "purify ourselves, even as he is pure;" to "give no occasion of stumbling to any brother;" to "give no offence to the church of God;" to "love our neighbor as ourselves;" to "do good to all as we have opportunity;" to "abstain from all appearance of evil;" to "use the world as not abusing it;" and, "whether we eat or drink, or whatsoever we do, to do all to the glory of God."

A Being of infinite benevolence could not prescribe rules of action less holy, and they are "the same that shall judge us in the last day." Any indulgence, therefore, not consistent with these rules, is rebellion against the great Lawgiver, and must disqualify us for "standing in the judgment."

As honest men, then, let us try by these rules the common practice of drinking or selling intoxicating liquor.

The use of such liquor, instead of enabling us to "present our bodies a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable," *actually degrades, and prematurely destroys both body and mind.* Dr. Rush, after enumerating various loathsome diseases, adds, that these are "the usual, natural, and legitimate consequences of its use." Another eminent physician says, "The observation of twenty years has convinced me, that were ten young men, on their twenty-first birthday, to begin to drink one glass of ardent spirit, and were they

to drink this supposed moderate quantity daily, the lives of eight out of the ten would be abridged by ten or fifteen years." When taken freely, its corrupting influences are strikingly manifest. And even when taken moderately, very few now pretend to doubt that it shortens life. But nothing can be clearer, than that he who thus wilfully cuts short his probation five, ten, or twenty years, is as truly a suicide, as if he slew himself violently. Or if he knowingly encourage his neighbor to do this, he is equally guilty. He is, by the law of God, "a murderer."

But besides prematurely destroying the body, alcoholic drink injures the immortal mind. To illustrate the blinding and perverting influence of even a small quantity of such liquor, let a strictly temperate man spend an evening with a dozen others indulging themselves "moderately:" they will be sure to say things which to him will appear foolish, if not wicked; and which will appear so to *themselves* on reflection; though at the time they may not be conscious of any impropriety. And if this "moderate indulgence" be habitual, there must, of course, be an increased mental perversion; till conscience is "seared as with a hot iron," and the mind is lost to the power of being affected by truth, as well as to the capacity for usefulness. And is this destruction of the talents God has given, consistent with the injunction to "glorify God in body and spirit?"

Again, the habit of drinking *is incompatible with that eminent holiness to which you are commanded to aspire.* The great Founder of Christianity enjoins, "Be ye perfect, even as your Father in heaven is perfect." This will be the true Christian's desire. And a soul aspiring to the image and full enjoyment of God, will have no relish for any counteracting influence.

Is it said, that for eminently holy men to "mingle strong drink" may be inconsistent; but not so for those less spiritual? This is making the want of spirituality an excuse for sensuality; thus adding sin to sin, and only provoking the Most High. His mandate is universal: "Be ye holy, for I am holy."

To this end you are charged to "abstain from fleshly lusts, which war against the soul;" to "mortify your members, which are earthly;" to "exercise yourselves rather unto godliness;" to "be kindly affectioned towards all men." But who does not know that "strong drink," not only "eats out the brain," but "taketh away the heart," diminishes "natural affection," and deadens the moral sensibilities, while it cherishes those very passions which the Holy Spirit condemns? And how can one aspiring to the divine image, drink that which thus tends to destroy all that is pure, spiritual, and lovely, while it kindles the very elements of hell?

The use of such liquor *is utterly inconsistent with any thing like high spiritual enjoyment, clear spiritual views, or true devotion.* A sense of shame must inevitably torment the professor who in such a day cannot resist those "fleshly lusts which war against the soul;" his brethren will turn from him in pity or disgust; and, what is infinitely more affecting, the Holy Spirit will not abide with him. Thus, without an approving conscience, without cordial Christian intercourse, without the smiles of the Comforter, how can he enjoy religion?

Abstinence from highly stimulating liquor or food has ever been regarded indispensable to that serenity of soul and clearness of views so infinitely desirable in matters of religion. Hence, the ministers of religion especially, were commanded not to touch any thing like strong drink when about to enter the sanctuary. Lev. 10: 9. And *this,* it is added, *shall be a statute for ever throughout your generations; that ye may put difference between holy and unholy;* clearly showing God's judgment of the effect of temperance on spiritual discernment.

On the principle of abstinence we may account, in part, for that holy ecstasy, that amazing clearness of spiritual vision, sometimes enjoyed on the deathbed. "Administer nothing," said the eloquent dying Summerfield, "that will create a stupor, not even so much as a little porter and water—*that I may have an unclouded view.*" For the same

reason, Dr. Rush, who so well knew the effect of strong drink, peremptorily ordered it not to be given him in his last hours. And it is recorded, that the dying SAVIOUR, "who knew all things," when offered "wine mingled with myrrh," "*received it not.*" The truly wise will not barter visions of glory for mere animal excitement and mental stupefaction.

Equally illustrative of our principle is the confession of an aged deacon, accustomed to drink moderately: "I always, in prayer, felt a coldness and heaviness at heart—*never suspecting it was the whiskey!* but since that is given up, I have *heavenly communion!*" O, what an increase of pure light and joy might there be, would all understand this, and be *temperate in all things.*"

The use of such liquor *is inconsistent with the sacred order and discipline of the church.* A venerable minister, of great experience, gives it as the result of his observation, that *nine-tenths* of all the cases calling for church discipline have in former years been occasioned by this liquor. This is a tremendous fact. But a little examination will convince any one that the estimate is not too high. And can it be right to continue an indulgence that brings tenfold, or even fourfold more trouble and disgrace on the church than all other causes united? Do not these foul "spots in your feasts of charity" clearly say, "Touch not the unclean thing?" Can we countenance that which is certain to bring deep reproach on the church of Christ? "It must needs be that offences come, but woe to that man by whom the offence cometh."

The use of alcoholic liquor by the religious community *is inconsistent with the hope of reforming and saving the intemperate;* and thus shows a *want of love to souls.* The Christian knows, that *drunkards cannot inherit eternal life.* He knows also, that hundreds of thousands now sustain or are contracting this odious character; and that if the evil be not arrested, millions more will come on in the same track, and go down to the burning gulf. But the man who drinks just so much as to make himself "feel well," cannot

reprove the drunkard who only does the same thing. The drunkard may say to him, "My appetite is stronger than yours; more, therefore, is necessary, in order to make me '*feel well;*' and if you cannot deny yourself, how can I control a more raging appetite?" This rebuke would be unanswerable.

All agree that total abstinence is the only hope of the drunkard. But is it not preposterous to expect him to abstain, if he sees the minister, the elder, the deacon, and other respectable men indulging their cups? With mind enfeebled and character lost, can he summon resolution to be singular, and live more temperately than his acknowledged superiors?—thus telling to all that *he has been a drunkard!* This cannot be expected of poor sunken human nature. No; let moderate drinking be generally allowed, and in less than thirty years, according to the past ratio of their deaths, armies of drunkards greater than all the American churches, will go from this land of light and freedom to "everlasting chains of darkness." If, then, the drunkard is worth saving, if he has a soul capable of shining with seraphim, and if you have "any bowels of mercies," then give him the benefit of your example. Professing to "do good to *all* as you have opportunity," be consistent in this matter. By a little self-denial you may save multitudes from ruin. But if you cannot yield *a little,* to save fellow-sinners from eternal pain, have you the spirit of Him who, for his enemies, exchanged a throne for a cross?

Could all the wailings of the thousand thousands slain by this poison come up in one loud thunder of remonstrance on your ear, you might then think it wrong to sanction its use. But "let God be true," and those wailings are as real as if heard in ceaseless thunders.

Again, the use of intoxicating drink *is inconsistent with true Christian patriotism.* All former efforts to arrest the national sin of intemperance have failed. A glorious effort is now making to remove it with pure water. Thousands are rejoicing in the remedy. Not a sober man in the nation really doubts its efficacy and importance. Who, then, that

regards our national, character can hesitate to adopt it? Especially, who that is a Christian, can cling to that which has darkened the pathway of heaven, threatened our liberties, desolated families and neighborhoods, and stigmatized us as a "nation of drunkards?"

Is it said, that the influence of a small temperance society, or church, is unimportant? Not so; its light may save the surrounding region; its example may influence a thousand churches. And let the thousand thousand professing Christians in this land, with such others as they can enlist, resolve on TOTAL ABSTINENCE—let this great example be held up to view—and it would be such a testimony as the world has not yet seen. Let such a multitude show, that these drinks are unnecessary, and reformation easy, and the demonstration would be complete. Few of the moral would continue the poison; thousands of the immoral abandon it at once; and the nation be reformed.

The use of this liquor is *inconsistent with the proper influence of Christian example.* The Saviour says, "Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father who is in heaven." But will men esteem Christians the more for *drinking*, and thus be led to glorify God on their behalf? Or will the Saviour praise them for this, "when he shall come to be glorified in his saints, and to be admired in all them that believe?" Rather, will not their drinking lead some to excess, and thus sully the Creator's work? Nay, is it not certain, that if the religious community indulge, the example will lead *millions* to drunkenness and perdition? And, on the other hand, is it not morally certain, that if they abstain, their combined influence will save millions from infamy and ruin? How, then, in view of that day when all the bearings of your conduct shall be judged, can you hesitate on which side to give your influence? It is not a little matter; for who can conceive the results of even *one* impulse, among beings connected with others by ten thousand strings!

The use of this liquor *is inconsistent with that harmony and brotherly love which Christ requires in his professed*

followers. He requires them to "love one another with a pure heart, fervently;" to "be all of one mind;" to be "of one heart and one soul." But who does not see the utter impossibility of this, if some continue an indulgence which others regard with abhorrence? Since public attention has been turned to the subject, thousands have come to the full conviction, that to use intoxicating liquor is a sinful as well as foolish practice. The most distinguished lights of the church, and such as peculiarly adorn human nature, embrace this sentiment. And how can you associate with these, and yet continue a habit viewed by them with disgust? Ah, the man, however decent, who "will have his glass, *not caring* whom he offends," *must have it;* but he must also "*have his reward.*" "Whoso shall *offend one of these little ones which believe in me,* it were better for him that a millstone were hanged about his neck."

The use of intoxicating drink, in this day of light, *is incompatible with the hope of receiving any general effusion of the Holy Spirit.* Christians are allowed to hope for the Spirit to be poured out only in answer to prayer—true, spiritual, believing prayer. "If they regard iniquity in their heart, the Lord will not hear them." If they wilfully cherish sin, they cannot have faith. Indeed, how odious the spectacle of a company looking towards heaven, but in the posture of devotion breathing forth the foul, fiery element—literally "offering strange fire before the Lord!"

We are not, then, to expect divine influence to come down "like showers that water the earth," till we put away that which we know tends only to wither and consume all the "fruits of the Spirit."

The *waste of property* in the use of alcoholic drink *is inconsistent with faithful stewardship for Christ.* Religious "contributions" are among the appointed means for saving the world. But allow each of the tens of thousands of professing Christians in this land only three cents worth of such liquor daily, and the annual cost is some MILLIONS OF DOLLARS; which would be sufficient to support THOUSANDS OF MISSIONARIES. Let "stewards" of the Lord's bounty,

then, who would consume their portion of this "*little*" on appetite, ponder and blush for such inconsistency; and let them hasten to clear off the heavy charge, "*Ye have robbed me, even this whole nation.*"

Again, to indulge in intoxicating liquor *is inconsistent with attempts to recommend the Gospel to the heathen.* Nothing has done more, in former years, to prejudice our Indian neighbors, and hinder among them the influence of the Gospel, than those liquors we have encouraged them to use. Several tribes have set the noble example of excluding them by the strong arm of law; and it is only by convincing such that really consistent Christians do not encourage these evils, that our missionaries have been able to gain their confidence.

The same feeling prevails in some distant heathen nations. They cannot but distrust those who use and sell a polluting drink, which *they*, to a great extent, regard with abhorrence.

Suppose our missionaries should meet the heathen with the Bible in one hand, and the intoxicating cup in the other; what impression would they make? Nature herself would revolt at the alliance. And nothing but custom and fashion have reconciled any to similar inconsistencies at home.

But not only must our missionaries be unspotted, they must be able to testify, that *no real Christians* encourage this or any unclean thing. With *such* testimony they might secure the conviction, that our religion is indeed elevating, and that our God is *the true God.* For saith Jehovah, "Then shall the *heathen* know that I am the Lord, when I shall be sanctified in you before their eyes."

Indulgence in this drink, especially by the church, *is inconsistent with any reasonable hope that the flood of intemperance would not return upon the land, even should it for a season be dried up.* The same causes which have produced it would produce it again, unless there be some *permanent* counteracting influence. Temperance associations are unspeakably important as means of reformation. But they are not permanent bodies; their organization may cease when intemperance is once done away; and unless the prin-

ciple of TOTAL ABSTINENCE be generally acknowledged and regarded as a Christian duty, by some great association that *is to be perpetual*, it may in time be forgotten or despised; and then drunkenness will again abound. Such an association is found only in "the church of the living God." This will continue while the world stands. Let the principle of ENTIRE ABSTINENCE, then, be recognized by all members of the church, and such others as they can influence; and you have a great multitude to sustain the temperance cause, "till time shall be no longer." And can the real Christian, or patriot, think it hard thus to enlist for the safety of all future generations? If parents love their offspring, if Christians love the millions coming upon the stage, will they not gladly secure them all from the destroyer? Has he a shadow of consistency who will rather do that, which, if done by the church generally, would lead millions to hopeless ruin?

The use of intoxicating drink, as an article of luxury or living, *is inconsistent with the plain spirit and precepts of God's word.* The proper use to be made of it, is so distinctly pointed out in Scripture, that men need not mistake. It is to be used as a *medicine* in *extreme cases.* "Give strong drink unto him that is *ready to perish.*" Its common use is condemned as foolish and pernicious. "Strong drink is raging; and whosoever is deceived thereby, is *not wise.*" "They are out of the way through strong drink; they err in vision; they stumble in judgment." Such passages show clearly the mind of God with respect to the nature and use of this article.

Moreover, it is said, "Woe unto him that giveth his neighbor drink." But does not every man who sells or uses this liquor, as a beverage, encourage his neighbor to drink, and thus contemn God's authority? Does he not aggravate his guilt by sinning against great light? And would he not aggravate it still further, should he charge the blame on the sacred word? O, what a blot on the Bible, should one sentence be added, *encouraging the common use of intoxicating liquor!* "If any man thus add,

God shall add unto him the plagues that are written in this book."

To encourage the manufacture of such liquors *is to abuse the bounties of Providence.* When God had formed man, he kindly said, "Behold, I have given you every herb bearing seed, which is upon the face of all the earth, and every tree, in the which is the fruit of a tree yielding seed; *to you it shall be for meat.*" God, then, it seems, intended men should use the fruits of the earth for *food.* But "they have sought out many inventions." And one of these is, to convert these "gifts of God" into a poison, most insidious in its nature, and destructive both to soul and body. The distiller, the vender, and the consumer, encourage one another in this perversion of God's gifts. And is this "receiving his gifts with thanksgiving?" Better, infinitely better, to cast them at once into the fire, and say unto the Almighty, "We have no need of these." But the ingratitude does not stop here. When men, in abuse of the divine bounty, have made this poison, to give it currency, they call it one of the "*creatures of God.*" With as much propriety might they call gambling establishments and murderous weapons his "creatures." But how awful the *impiety* of thus ascribing the worst of man's inventions to the benevolent God!

For a man to *persevere in making, selling, or using intoxicating liquor, as an article of luxury or living,* WHILE FULLY KNOWING ITS EFFECTS, *and possessing* THE LIGHT PROVIDENCE HAS POURED ON THIS SUBJECT, *is utterly inconsistent with any satisfactory evidence of piety.* "By their fruits ye shall know them." And what are *his* fruits. Why, as we have seen, he wilfully cuts short his own life, or the life of his neighbor; he wilfully impairs memory, judgment, imagination, all the immortal faculties, merely for sensual indulgence or paltry gain; he stupefies conscience, and cherishes all the evil passions; he prefers sordid appetite to pure spiritual enjoyment; he is the occasion of stumbling to those for whom Christ died, and of dark reproach on the church; he neglects the only means Providence has pointed

out for saving millions from drunkenness and perdition; he wilfully encourages their downward course; he refuses the aid he might give to a great national reform; he lends his whole weight against this reformation; he is the occasion of offence, grief, and discord among brethren; he grieves the Holy Spirit; he robs the Lord's treasury; he makes Christianity infamous in the eyes of the heathen; he disregards the plain spirit of the Bible; and, in fine, he perverts even the common bounties of Providence. Such are his fruits. And the man, surely, who can do all this in meridian light, while God is looking on, and widows and orphans are remonstrating, *does not give satisfactory evidence of piety.* He shows neither respect for God nor love to man.

Let conscience now solemnly review this whole argument by the infinitely holy law. Is it indeed right and scriptural to impair body and mind, to defile the flesh, cloud the soul, stupefy conscience, and cherish the worst passions? Is it right to bring occasions of stumbling into the church? Is it right to encourage drunkards; right to treat with contempt a great national reform? Is it right to offend such as Christ calls "brethren;" right to grieve the Holy Spirit, and hinder his blessed influence? Is it right to "consume on lust" what would fill the Lord's treasury; and right to make religion odious to the heathen? Is it right to leave the land exposed to new floods of intemperance; to disregard the manifest lessons of God's word and providence; and to convert food to poison? Is it indeed scriptural and right to sanction habits fraught only with wounds, death, and perdition? Can *real Christians,* by example, propagate such heresy?

Let it not be suggested that our argument bears chiefly against the *excessive* use of these liquors; for common observation and candor will testify that the *moderate* use of the poison is the real occasion of all its woes and abominations. Who was ever induced to taste, by the disgusting sight of a drunkard? Or who ever became a drunkard, except by moderate indulgence in the beginning? Indeed,

this habit of moderate drinking is, perhaps, tenfold *worse* in its general influence on society than occasional instances of drunkenness; for these excite abhorrence and alarm, while moderate indulgence sanctions the general use, and betrays millions to destruction. O never, since the first temptation, did Satan gain such a victory, as when he induced Christians to sanction everywhere the use of intoxicating liquor. And never, since the triumph of Calvary, has he experienced such a defeat as they are now summoned to accomplish. Let them unitedly pledge themselves against strong drink, and by *diffusing light on this subject,* do as much to expose as they have done to encourage this grand device of Satan, and mighty rivers of death will soon be dried up.

In this work of LIGHT AND LOVE, then, be *generous,* "be sober, be self-denying, be vigilant, be of one mind;" for the great adversary, "as a roaring lion, walketh about." And possibly through apathy, or discord, or treason among professed friends of temperance, "Satan may yet get an advantage," and turn our fair morning into a heavier night of darkness, and tempest, and war. But woe to that man who, in this day of light, shall wilfully encourage the *exciting cause* of such evils. And heaviest woe to him who shall avail himself of a standing in the church for this purpose. I hear for such a loud remonstrance from countless millions yet unborn, and a louder still from the throne of eternal Justice.

But "though we thus speak," we hope better things, especially from the decided followers of the Lamb, of every name; "things which make for peace, things wherewith one may edify another, and things which accompany salvation" to a dying world.

THE

ETERNAL MISERY OF HELL.

BY REV. JAMES SAURIN.

God would never threaten mankind with a punishment, the infliction of which would be incompatible with his perfections. If the reality of such a hell as the Scriptures describe be inconsistent with the perfections of the Creator, such a hell would not have been revealed. The infinite holiness of God will not allow him to terrify his creatures with the idea of a punishment which he cannot inflict without injustice; and, considering the weakness of our reason and the narrow limits of our knowledge, we ought not to say, Such a thing is unjust; therefore, it is not revealed: but on the contrary, we should rather say, Such a thing is revealed; therefore, it is just.

Observe, then, the quality and the duration of the punishments of hell.

A privation of celestial happiness is the first idea of hell—an idea which we are incapable of forming fully in this life. We have eyes of flesh and blood—we judge of happiness and misery according to this flesh and blood, and as things relate to our families, our fortunes, our professions; and we seldom think we have immortal souls. In the great day of retribution all these veils will be taken away; darkness will be dissipated; scales will fall from our eyes; the chief good will be known; but what will be the condition of him, who no sooner discovers the chief good than he discovers also that he shall be for ever deprived of it. Represent to yourself a man constrained to see, and made by his own experience to know, that the pleasures, the grandeur, and all the riches of this world are nothing

but wind and smoke; and that true felicity consists in communion with God—in beholding his perfections and participating his glory: or, to use emblems taken from Scripture, represent to yourself a man who shall see the nuptial chamber of the bridegroom—his triumphant pomp and his magnificent palace; and who shall see all these glorious objects as felicities which his crimes forbid him to enjoy. What regrets! what despair! Lord of nature! Being of beings! adorable assemblage of all perfections! Eternal Father! well-beloved Son! Holy Spirit! glorious body of the divine Redeemer! archangels! cherubim! seraphim! powers! dominions! general assembly of the first-born! myriads of angels! apostles! martyrs! saints of all ages and of all nations! unfading crown! perfect knowledge! communion of a soul with its God! throne of glory! fulness of joy! rivers of pleasure! All which I see, all which I know, and wish to enjoy, even while avenging justice separates me from you. Am I, then, for ever excluded from all your ineffable delights; are you all shown to me to make me more sensible of my misery; and do you display so much felicity only to render my pain more acute, and my destruction more terrible?

Consider *painful sensations.* To these belong all those expressions of Scripture—"darkness, blackness of darkness, thirst, fire, lake burning with fire and brimstone"—and all these to such a degree that the damned would esteem as an invaluable benefit one drop of water *to cool their tongues.* Luke 16 : 24. We dare not pretend to determine that hell consists of material fire. But if you recollect the power of God to excite in our souls such sensations as he pleases—if to this reflection you add the thought, that Scripture almost always employs the idea of fire to express the pains of hell, you will be inclined to believe that most of these unhappy sufferers literally endure torments like those which men burning in flames feel, whether God act immediately on their souls, or unite them to particles of material fire. The very name given in Scripture to the fire of hell,

hath something very significant in it: it is called *the fire of Gehenna.* Matt. 5 : 22. This word is compounded of words which signify *the valley of Hinnom:* this valley was rendered famous by the abominable sacrifices which the idolatrous Jews offered to Moloch. They set up a hollow brazen figure, inclosed their children in it, kindled fires underneath, and in this horrible manner consumed the miserable infant victims of their cruel superstition. This is an image of hell—terrible image! We have no need of abstract and metaphysical ideas. Who among us could patiently bear his hand one hour in fire? who would not tremble to be condemned to pass one day in this monstrous machine? and who, who could bear to be eternally confined in it—"and yet forbid to die?" When we see a criminal in chains, given up to an executioner of human justice, and just going to be burnt to death, nature shudders at the sight—the flesh of spectators shivers—and the cries of the sufferer rend their heart, and excite, in painful compassion, all the emotions of the soul! What then must it be to be delivered up to an executioner of *divine justice?* What to be cast into the fire of hell? Delicate flesh! feeble organs of the human body! what will you do when you are cast into the quick and devouring flames of hell?

The third idea of future punishment is that of the *remorse of conscience.* The pains of the mind are as lively and sensible as those of the body. The grief of one man who loses a person dear to him; the inquietude of another afraid of apparitions and spectres; the gloomy terrors of a third in solitude; the emotions of a criminal receiving his sentence of death; and above all, the agitation of a conscience filled with a sense of guilt, are pains as lively and sensible as those which are excited by the most cruel torments. What great effects has remorse produced. It has made tyrants tremble; it has smitten the knees of a Belshazzar together in the midst of his courtiers; it has rendered the voluptuous insensible to pleasure; and it has put many a hardened wretch upon the rack. It has done more:

it has forced some, who upon scaffolds and wheels have denied their crimes, after a release, to confess them—to find out a judge—to give evidence against themselves—and to implore the mercy of a violent death, more tolerable than the agonies of their guilty souls. This will be the state of the damned—this will be *the worm that never dies!* Conscience will do homage to an avenging God: it will be forced to acknowledge that the motives of the Gospel were highly proper to affect every man who had not made his *face as an adamant—his forehead harder than a flint.* It will be forced to acknowledge that the goodness of God had been enough to penetrate every heart—even those which were least capable of gratitude; it will be constrained to own that the strivings of the Spirit of God had been wilfully resisted; it will be driven to own that the destruction of man came of himself, and that he sacrificed his salvation to vain imaginations, more delusive than vanity itself. The testimony of a good conscience hath supported martyrs in fire and tortures. When a martyr said to himself, I suffer for truth; I bear my Saviour's cross; I am a martyr for God himself; he was happy in spite of seeming horrors. But when the reproaches of conscience are added to terrible torments, when the sufferer is obliged to say to himself, I am the author of my own punishment; I suffer for my own sins; I am a victim for the devil; nothing can equal his horror and despair.

A fourth idea is taken from the horror of the *society in hell.* How great soever the misery of a man on earth may be, he bears it with patience, when wise discourse is addressed to him for his consolation—when a friend opens his bosom to him—when a father shares his sufferings, and a charitable hand endeavors to wipe away his tears; the conversation of a grave and sympathizing friend diminishes his troubles, softens his pains, and charms him under his afflictions, till he becomes easy and happy in them. But what society is that in hell? Imagine yourself condemned to pass all your days with those odious men who seem formed

only to trouble the world. Imagine yourself shut up in a close prison with a band of reprobates—imagine yourself lying on a death-bed, and having no other comforters than traitors and assassins! This is an image of hell. O God, what a society! tyrants, assassins, blasphemers—Satan with his angels—the prince of the air with all his infernal legions!

From all these ideas results a fifth—an *increase of sin*. As God will aggravate the sufferings of the damned by displaying his glorious attributes, their hatred of him will be unbounded—their torment will excite their hatred—their hatred will aggravate their torment. Is not this the height of misery? To be filled with unmixed hate towards the perfect Being, the supreme Being, the sovereign Beauty—in a word, to hate the infinite God! Does not this idea present to your mind a state the most melancholy, the most miserable? One chief excellence of the glory of happy spirits is a consummate love to their Creator. One of the most horrible punishments of hell is the exclusion of divine love. O miserable state of the damned! In it they utter as many blasphemies against God as the happy souls in heaven shout hallelujahs to his praise.

These are the punishments of condemned souls. It remains only that we consider the LENGTH AND DURATION of them. But can we number the innumerable, and measure that which is immeasurable? Can we make you comprehend the incomprehensible; and shall we amuse you with our imaginations?

When I endeavor to represent eternity to myself, I avail myself of whatever I conceive most long and durable. I go back to the patriarchal age, and consider a life extending through a thousand years; and I say to myself, All this is not eternity—all this is only a point in comparison of eternity.

I go from our age to the time of publishing the Gospel; from thence to the publication of the law—from the law to the flood, from the flood to the creation; I join this epoch

to the present time, and I imagine Adam yet living. Had Adam lived till now, and had he lived in misery—had he passed all his time in fire, or on a rack—what idea must we form of his condition? At what price would we agree to expose ourselves to misery so great? What imperial glory would appear glorious, were it followed by so much woe? Yet this is not eternity—all this is nothing in comparison of eternity.

I go further still: I proceed from imagination to imagination, from one supposition to another; I take the greatest number of years that can be imagined; I add ages to ages, millions of ages to millions of ages; I form of all these one fixed number, and I stay my imagination. After this, I suppose God to create a world like this which we inhabit: I suppose him creating it, by forming one atom after another, and employing in the production of each atom the time fixed in my calculation just now mentioned. What numberless ages would the creation of such a world in such a manner require! Then I suppose the Creator to arrange these atoms, and to pursue the same plan of arranging them as of creating them. What numberless ages would such an arrangement require! Finally, I suppose him to dissolve and annihilate the whole, and observing the same method in this dissolution as he observed in the creation and disposition of the whole. What an immense duration would be consumed! Yet this is not eternity—all this is only a point in comparison of eternity.

Associate now all these suppositions, and of all these periods make one fixed period; multiply it again, and suppose yourself to pass in multiplying it a time equal to that which the period contains: it is literally and strictly true, all this is not eternity—all this is only a point in comparison of eternity.

Ah me! one night passed in a burning fever, or in struggling in the waves of the sea between life and death, appears of immense length. It seems to the sufferer as if the sun had forgot its course, and as if the laws of nature

itself were subverted. What, then, will be the state of those miserable victims of divine displeasure, who, after they shall have passed through the ages we have been describing, will be obliged to make this overwhelming reflection: All this is only an atom of our misery! What will their despair be, when they shall be forced to say to themselves, Again we must revolve through these enormous periods—again we must suffer a privation of celestial happiness—devouring flames again—cruel remorse again—crimes and blasphemies over and over again! *For ever—for ever!* Ah, how severe is this word, even in this life! How great is a misfortune, when it is incapable of relief—how insupportable, when we are obliged to add *for ever* to it! These irons for ever—these chains for ever—this prison for ever—this universal contempt for ever—this domestic trouble for ever! Poor mortals, how short-sighted are you to call sorrows eternal, which end with your lives! What, this life—this life, that passeth with the rapidity of a *weaver's shuttle*—this life, which vanisheth *like a sleep!* Is this what you call *for ever?* Ah, absorbing periods of eternity—accumulated myriads of ages—these, if I may be allowed to speak so—these will be the FOR EVER *of the damned!*

I sink under the weight of this subject; and I declare, when I see my friends, my relations, the people of my charge—when I think that I, that you, that we are all threatened with these torments—when I see, in the lukewarmness of my devotions, in the languor of my love, in the faintness of my resolutions and designs, the least evidence, though it be only probable or presumptive, of my future misery, yet I find in the thought a mortal poison, which diffuses itself into every period of my life, rendering society tiresome, nourishment insipid, pleasure disgustful, and life itself a cruel bitter—I cease to wonder that a fear of hell has made some melancholy, and others mad; that it has inclined some to expose themselves to a living martyrdom by fleeing from all commerce with the rest of mankind, and others to suffer the most violent and terrible torments.

But the more terror this idea inspires, the more inexcusable we are, if it produce no good fruits in us. The idea of eternity ought to subvert all our sinful projects. In order to avoid eternal misery, all should be suffered, all surmounted, all undertaken—sinful self should be crucified, and the whole man devoted in holy sacrifice to God. Let each moment of life expose us to a new martyrdom; still, we should be happy, could we avoid the flaming sword that hangs over our heads, and escape the gulfs of misery which yawn beneath our feet.

But remember, this life is the only time given to prevent these terrible punishments. After this life, no more exhortations, no more sermons, no more place for repentance.

And think on the *brevity* of life—think there may be perhaps only one year granted, perhaps only one month, perhaps only one day, perhaps only one hour, perhaps only one moment, to avoid this misery; so that, perhaps—O, Lord, avert the dreadful supposition!—perhaps you may this very day experience all these torments.

Finally, consider what God is now doing in your favor. In the plenitude of his compassion, and with bowels of tenderest love, he entreats and exhorts you to escape these terrible miseries; he conjures you not to destroy yourself; he saith to you, O that my people would hearken unto me! Be instructed, O Jerusalem, lest my soul depart from thee! Why, why will ye die, O house of Israel? O, if there remained the least spark of reason in us, the image of hell would make the deepest impression on our souls, and give us no rest till we had full evidence that our feet were planted on the everlasting Rock!

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MEANS OF A REVIVAL.

BY PRESIDENT EDWARDS.

The first duty to which our attention should be directed is to *remove stumbling-blocks.* When God is revealed as about to come gloriously to set up his kingdom in the world, it is proclaimed, "Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make straight in the desert a highway for our God." "Cast ye up, cast ye up, prepare the way, take up the stumbling-blocks out of the way of my people." And in order to this, there must be *confessing of faults.* There is hardly any duty more contrary to our corrupt dispositions and mortifying to the pride of man; but it must be done. Repentance of faults is, in a peculiar manner, a proper duty, when the kingdom of heaven is at hand, or when we especially expect or desire that it should come; as appears by John the Baptist's preaching. And if God now loudly calls upon us to repent, then he also calls upon us to make proper manifestations of our repentance. For Christians to act like Christians in openly humbling themselves when they have openly offended, brings in the end the greatest honor to Christ and religion; and in this way are persons most likely to have God appear for them.

Again, at such a day as this God especially calls his people to the exercise of *meekness and mutual forbearance.* Christ appears as it were coming in his kingdom, which calls for great moderation in our behavior towards all men; as is evident from Phil. 4 : 5, "Let your moderation be known unto all men; the Lord is at hand:" the awe of the Divine majesty that appears present or approaching, should dispose us to it, and deter us from the contrary. For us to be judging one another, and showing fierceness and bitter-

ness one towards another, when he who is the Searcher of all hearts, to whom we must all give an account, appears so remarkably present, is exceedingly unsuitable. Our business at such a time should be at home, searching ourselves, condemning ourselves, taking heed to ourselves. If there be glorious prosperity to the church of God approaching, those that are the most meek will have the largest share in it: for when Christ "rides forth in his glory and majesty, it is because of truth, meekness, and righteousness." And when God remarkably "arises to execute judgment, it is to save all the meek of the earth." And it is "the meek" that "shall increase their joy in the Lord." And when the time comes that God will give this lower world into the hands of his saints, it is "the meek" that "shall inherit the earth." But "with the froward, God will show himself froward." Psalm 18 : 26.

Contrary to this meekness, is stigmatizing one another with odious names, which tends greatly to widen and perpetuate breaches. Such distinguishing names of reproach do, as it were, divide Christians into armies, separated and drawn up in battle array, ready to fight one with another, which greatly hinders the work of God.

Again, there is peculiarly requisite in God's people the exercise of great patience in *waiting on God under any special difficulties and disadvantages* as to the means of grace. The beginning of a revival of religion will naturally and necessarily be attended with difficulties of this nature, by reason of what remains of the old disease of a general corruption of the visible church. We cannot expect that, after a long period of degeneracy and depravity in the state of the church, things should all become right at once; it must be a work of time: and for God's people to be over-hasty and violent in such a case, being resolved to have every thing rectified at once, or else forcibly to deliver themselves by breaches and separations, is the way to hinder the very result they desire, and to break in pieces. The case, indeed, may be such, the difficulty so intolerable, as to allow of no delay, and that God's people cannot continue in the state wherein they were without violating absolute commands of God. But otherwise, though the difficulty may be very great, another course should be taken. God's peo-

ple should have recourse directly to the throne of grace, to present their difficulties before the "great Shepherd of the sheep," who has the care of all the affairs of his church; and while they do this they should wait patiently upon him. If they do so, they may expect that in his time he will appear for their deliverance; but if, instead of this, they are impatient, and take the work into their own hands, they will betray their want of faith, and will dishonor God, and cannot have such reason to hope that Christ will appear for them as they have desired. They will rather have reason to fear that he will leave them to manage their affairs for themselves as well as they can; when if they had waited on Christ patiently, *continuing instant in prayer*, he would have appeared for them much more effectually to deliver them. "He that believeth shall not make haste;" and it is for those that are found patiently waiting on the Lord under difficulties, that he will especially appear when he comes to do great things for his church.

What has been said thus far, has relation to our obligations, as we would prevent the hinderance of a revival; but besides these, there are things that must be done *more directly to advance it.* And here it concerns every one, in the first place, to look into his own heart, and see to it that he be a partaker of the benefits of the work himself, and that it be promoted *in his own soul.* It is manifestly with respect to a time of great revival of religion that we have that gracious, earnest, and moving invitation proclaimed in Isaiah 55, "Ho, every one that thirsteth," etc., as is evident by what precedes and what follows. In the sixth verse, it is said, "Seek ye the Lord while he may be found; call upon him while he is near." And it is with special reference to such a time that Christ proclaims, "I will give unto him that is athirst, of the fountain of the water of life freely."

Especially we that are *ministers* not only have need of some true experience of the saving influence of the Spirit of God upon our heart, but we need a double portion of the Spirit of God at such a time as this; we have need to be as full of light as a glass held out in the sun; and with respect to love and zeal, to be like the angels that are a flame of

fire. The state of the times requires a fulness of the divine Spirit in ministers, and we ought to give ourselves no rest till we have obtained it. And in order to this, I should think ministers, above all persons, ought to be much in secret prayer and fasting, and also much in prayer and fasting one with another. It seems to me it would be becoming the circumstances of the present day, if ministers in a neighborhood would often meet together, and spend days in fasting and fervent prayer among themselves, earnestly seeking for extraordinary supplies of divine grace from heaven.

Ministers in a special manner should act as *fellow-helpers* in their great work. It should be seen that they are animated and engaged, and exert themselves with one heart and soul, and with united strength, to promote the revival of religion; and to this end they should often meet together, and act in concert. And if it were a common thing for ministers to join in public exercises and second one another in their preaching, earnestly enforcing each other's warnings and counsels, I believe it would be of great service. Such united zeal in ministers would have a great tendency to awaken attention and impress and animate the hearers, as has been found by experience in some parts of the country.

Two things very essential in ministers, if they would greatly advance the kingdom of Christ, are *zeal* and *resolution.* The influence and power of these to bring to pass great effects, is more important than can well be imagined: a man of but ordinary capacity will do more with them, than one of ten times the ability and learning without them: more may be done with them in a few days or weeks, than can be done without them in many years.

Zeal and courage will do much in persons of but ordinary capacity; but especially would they do great things, if joined with superior abilities. If some distinguished men who have appeared in our nation, had been as eminent in piety as they were in philosophy, and had engaged in the Christian cause with as much zeal and fervency as some others have done, and with a proportionable blessing of heaven, they would have moved and sent a benign influence through the world. We have many ministers and pious laymen in the land distinguished for talents and learning; they should consider how much is expected and will be

required of them by their Lord and Master, and how much they might do for Christ, and what honor and how glorious a reward they might receive, if they had in their hearts a heavenly warmth and divine zeal proportionable to their light.

Rich men, too, have a talent in their hands, in the disposal and improvement of which they might very much promote the revival and advancement of religion. They have advantages far beyond others to do good, and lay up for themselves treasures in heaven. One would think that all our rich men who call themselves Christians, might devise or select some glorious object to accomplish with their money, for advancing the kingdom of their Redeemer and the prosperity of the souls of men, at a time of such extraordinary opportunities for it. It seems to me, that in this age most of us have but very narrow, penurious notions of Christianity, as it respects the use and disposal of temporal goods. The primitive Christians had not such limited notions; they were trained up by the apostles in another way. And I trust in God the days are coming, when the great and rich men of the world *shall bring their honor and glory into the church*, and shall, as it were, strip themselves to spread their garments under Christ's feet, as he enters triumphantly into Jerusalem; and when those that will not do so shall have no glory, their silver and gold shall be cankered, and their garments moth-eaten: for the saints shall then inherit the earth, and those that honor God he will honor, and those that despise him shall be lightly esteemed.

If some of our rich men would give one quarter of their property to advance this work, they would act in some degree as if they lived for the kingdom of Christ, and as rich men by and by will act, who shall be partakers of the spiritual wealth and glories of that kingdom. Great things might be done by liberal contributions for the support and propagation of religion; by supporting preachers eminently qualified by gifts and grace, in more destitute parts of the country; by bringing forward young men of promising abilities, and whose hearts are full of love to Christ, for the ministry; and by distributing books that are remarkably fitted to promote vital religion, or bearing the expense of

sending such books into various parts of the land to be sold.*

But I would now proceed to mention some things that at such a day *concern all.*

And the first is, *fasting and prayer.* It seems to me that circumstances loudly call on God's people to abound in this; whether they consider the blessing already received in the effusions of his Spirit; the great encouragement he has given to prayer in the richness and freeness of his grace; or the opposition of Satan, and the many obstacles that must be encountered.

It is God's will, through his wonderful grace, that the prayers of his saints should be one principal means of advancing the kingdom of Christ in the world. When God has something very great to accomplish for his church, it is his will that there should precede it the extraordinary prayers of his people; as is manifest in Ezek. 36 : 37, "I will yet for this *be inquired of* by the house of Israel, to do it for them;" together with the context. And it is revealed, that when God is about to accomplish great things for his church, he will begin by remarkably pouring out the spirit of grace and supplication. Zech. 12 : 10. If, in the time of Christ, the devil was not cast out of a particular person, under a bodily possession, without extraordinary prayer, *or prayer and fasting;* how much less should we expect that he will be cast out of the land and the world without it?

I am sensible that much has been done in duties of this kind, in some places; but I do not think so much as God, in the present dispensations of his providence and grace, calls for. I think the people of God, in this land, at such a time as this, would be in the way of their duty to devote themselves three times as much as they do to fasting and prayer; not only, nor principally, for the pouring out of the Spirit on those towns or places where they reside; but that God would appear for his church, and in mercy to miserable men, carry on his work throughout the land, and the world of mankind, and fulfil the things he has spoken

* The standard evangelical volumes of the American Tract Society, are well adapted to this purpose.

in his word, and for which his church has been so long wishing, and hoping, and waiting. *They that make mention of the Lord* at this day, ought not *to keep silence*, and should *give him no rest till he establish, and till he make Jerusalem a praise in the earth.* Before the first great outpouring of the Spirit of God on the Christian church, which began at Jerusalem, the church of God gave themselves to incessant prayer. There is a time spoken of, wherein God will remarkably and wonderfully appear for the deliverance of his church from all her enemies, and when he will *avenge his own elect;* and Christ reveals that this will be in answer to their incessant prayers, *crying day and night.* Luke 18 : 7. In Israel, the day of atonement, which was their great day of fasting and prayer, preceded and made way for the glorious and joyful feast of tabernacles. When Christ is mystically born into the world to rule over all nations, it is represented in Rev. 12, as being in consequence of the church's "crying, and travailing in birth." One thing here intended, doubtless, is her crying and agonizing in prayer.

God seems now to be waiting for this from us. When God is about to bestow some great blessing on his church, he often so orders events in his providence as to show his church their great need of it, and thus bring them to cry earnestly to him. And let us consider God's present dispensations towards his church in this land: a glorious work of grace has been begun and carried on; but God has suffered difficulties to arise, and yet does not wholly forsake the work of his hand; there are remarkable tokens of his presence still to be seen; as though he was not forward to forsake us, and, if I may so say, as though he had a mind to carry on his work, but only was waiting for something that he expected in us, as requisite in order to it. And we have great reason to think that one thing at least is, that we should further acknowledge the greatness and necessity of such a mercy, and our dependence on God for it, in earnest prayer.

There is, perhaps, no way that Christians can do so much to promote the work of God, and advance the kingdom of Christ, as by fervent prayer. Let persons have ever so small advantages to do much for Christ and the souls of men otherwise; yet, if they have much of the spirit of grace and supplication, they may have power with

Him that is infinite in power; and thus a poor man in his cottage may exert a blessed influence all over the world. God is, if I may so say, at the command of the prayer of faith; and in this respect is, as it were, under the power of his people: *as princes, they have power with God, and prevail.*

Finally, to promote a revival among a professing people, one proper means, recommended by frequent Scripture examples, is their solemn, public *renewing their covenant with God.* And doubtless it would greatly tend to promote a work of grace in the land, if the congregations of God's people generally should do this; if, at a proper time, a draft of a covenant should be made by their ministers, wherein there should be an express mention of those particular duties that the people of the respective congregations have been observed to be most prone to neglect, and those particular sins into which they have fallen, or of which they are especially in danger, whereby they may prevent or resist the motions of God's Spirit; and the matter should be fully proposed and explained to the people, and sufficient opportunity be given them for consideration, and then they should appear together, on a day of prayer and fasting, publicly to own it before God in his house, as their vows to the Lord. In this way, congregations of Christians might do that which would be beautiful, would honor God, and be very profitable to themselves, and the occasion of joy in heaven over many repenting sinners.

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WHAT HAVE I DONE?

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THE person into whose hand this treatise may come, is supposed to ask, "What have I done?" and it is designed to answer his question. Let no one refuse to consider the answer on the ground that he knows already what he has done better than any one can tell him. It may appear, on examination, that you have yet much to learn in regard to what you have done. Nor let any one deny me a hearing, on the plea that it matters not what he has done. It matters *much;* you are a moral and accountable agent, answerable for your conduct to God. There is a rule by which it should be regulated: God is the author of that rule, and he is the avenger of its violations. There is a conduct which is pleasing to him, and a conduct which is displeasing: and whether he be pleased or displeased, whether he smile or frown, is certainly of *some* consequence.

The inquiry relates not merely to overt acts: what you have done, embraces what you have *said, thought,* and *felt,* as well as what you have acted; and for all you are equally accountable. "The law is spiritual—the commandment is exceeding broad—God will bring every work into judgment, with every *secret* thing—all a man's ways are right in his own eyes, but the Lord *pondereth the heart*—the Lord *weigheth the spirit.*"

This language, "What have I done?" sometimes bespeaks a mind utterly devoid of conviction. It asks, in a

spirit of self-justification, what evil the person has done. At other times it expresses the keenest sensibility to sin. A person having done something, the evil nature of which he did not at the time fully apprehend, and the sad consequences of which he did not foresee, when afterwards he comes to perceive the evil and mischief of it, *exclaims* in mingled alarm and grief, "What have I done!"

I shall consider it as the language of simple *inquiry;* as the serious *interrogation* of a person willing to know what he hath done. And God grant that while I am answering the *interrogation*, "What have I done?" it may become the heart-felt *exclamation* of each impenitent reader.

You ask what you have done. I will tell you; neither on the one hand extenuating, nor on the other exaggerating.

1. What if you had done *nothing?* You say, "What have I done?" meaning perhaps that you have done *nothing*, and supposing that this is a valid plea, a sufficient justification for you. But is it so? Can I not condemn you on your own admission, out of your own mouth? You have done *nothing!* But you are required to do *something* —aye, *much*. You have done *nothing!* Then you have not loved God with all your heart, nor glorified him in your body and spirit, which are his. If you have done nothing, you have broken *one-half*, at least, of the law of God. In so far as its *positive* requirements are concerned, you are guilty, according to your own confession. It was for *not doing* that the inhabitants of Meroz were cursed—"they *came not* to the help of the Lord against the mighty." They staid at home and minded their worldly business. And Christ will say, he informs us, to those on his left hand, in the final day, when he bids them depart from him, "Inasmuch as ye *did it not*," etc. And he says also, "Cast ye the *unprofitable* servant," the servant that *does*

nothing, "into outer darkness." You have done nothing! But to do *nothing* when there is so much required to be done, is to do *evil*—to do *wrong*—to do that which must cast you away for ever. You need do no more than *nothing* to insure and justify your condemnation. Strange, that you should expect to be justified for the very reason for which Christ says he will condemn men! But,

2. This plea, though it would not sustain you, if you could offer it, you cannot offer, for you *have done something.* You have not been idle. You are no mere *negative* character. You have acted under law, and in view of law, as a moral and accountable agent. As such, you have performed innumerable acts, and have been the subject of numberless exercises of thought and feeling; each of which acts and exercises has possessed a moral character, has or has not been conformed to the revealed rule of duty, and is worthy of praise or blame. It is impossible to compute the number of times you have acted and been exercised in the capacity of a moral agent and an accountable subject of the law of God; and all these have been acts of obedience or of disobedience. Each exercise has been right or wrong. They have met the approbation of God, or provoked his displeasure. If they have been worthy of reward, they will be rewarded; if of punishment, they will be punished. Of the one or the other, they are worthy. All the while you have lived, God has been looking on your heart and life, and in view of each emotion, thought, and act, has smiled or frowned.

Yes, you have done something: you have formed a *decided* character. You have laid up a large store of something for the future; you have done a great deal of good or evil; you are very much in the right, or very far in the wrong: which is it? *What* have you done?

3. You have done *wrong.* You have acted unreason-

ably and unfitly. You have acted in opposition to those dictates of duty which come to you from within. You have disobeyed conscience. You have transgressed the law written upon the heart.

You have done more: you have not only sinned against your own soul, but against God. You have disobeyed the Lord of conscience. You have acted contrary to his known will; broken his holy, just, and good law. You have done all this—you cannot deny it—*wrong*, and thus wrong.

4. Now, suppose you had done this but once; suppose that of your innumerable acts and exercises only one was *sinful*. Even on that supposition you are guilty, condemned, inexcusable, and undone. You cannot answer for that one sin. The divine law tolerates sin in no respect, and in no instance. "Cursed is every one that continueth not in *all things* written in the book of the law to do them. He that offendeth in one point, is guilty of all." Gal. 3 : 10; James 2 : 10. The law of God is *one*, and he that breaks it in any part, breaks it all. The *angels* who kept not their first estate, were consigned to the place they now occupy, in chains and utter darkness, for *doing wrong* ONCE. Did God wait for a *second* offence? Why should he? Does human law wait for the repetition of a crime? In like manner Adam, for *one* offence, incurred the sentence of death. Now, if you have done wrong *only once*, you have done as much as dethroned the angels, and destroyed the father of the human race. If one offence ruined them, is not *one* enough to ruin you? But I need not speak on this supposition, for,

5. You have done wrong *more than once*. How many times in your life do you suppose that you have acted, spoken, thought, and felt sinfully and wrong? So many times, that there is but one Being who *can* tell *how many;* and he *will* tell, when "the books are opened" before assembled worlds.

Some appear to think that if their *wrong* doings, no matter how *many* they be, do not exceed their *right* doings; if their good deeds only outnumber by one their evil deeds, they have nothing to fear, and this is all that is required of them. For this opinion there is as little support derived from reason as from Scripture. There is none from either. It is absolute folly to think and talk thus. A man should be *ashamed* to entertain such an opinion. All analogy is against it. Is this all that the magistrate requires of the subject, or the parent of the child; namely, that they be careful to maintain a proper proportion between their acts of obedience and their acts of disobedience, never permitting the latter to outnumber the former? May the subject or the child break *this* law, provided only he obey *that?* Does not *all* law require *universal* obedience? Did any law ever allow or excuse its own transgression in any respect or instance? There is not a government or society of any kind existing among men, having laws or rules for its regulation, which does not require the strict observance of all its rules by its every member. It punishes every breach of each rule. It does not wait till more than half of them are broken.

Yet men expect that the great and jealous God will allow them to treat his holy, just, and good law, as no other law was ever allowed to be treated. And all the hope which many have is built on this expectation. Standing on this foundation, they are looking forward to the prospect of meeting God, with a calmness and confidence that nothing seems capable of disturbing. They acknowledge they have sinned, and they do not pretend that they have repented and secured an interest in the atonement. They have not, they suppose, sinned enough for that. It is not every sin, according to their notion, that renders repentance and a satisfaction necessary; but only the *surplusage* of sin, if any there should be, after their good doings are subtracted from their evil

ones! Into what absurdity and folly, not to say aggravated guilt, will erring mortals plunge. Sin first infatuates, then destroys them. It begins with making *fools* of them, and ends with making them *wretches*.

You perceive, then, that it would avail nothing, though you could maintain the ground, that your right doings outnumber your wrong doings. But even this ground, were it available, you cannot maintain. For,

6. *You have not done more good than evil—more right than wrong.* I know it is an astounding and unpalatable sentiment that I am about to advance; but it has the recommendation of being *true*, if it is not popular. You may disbelieve it, but you cannot *disprove* it. It is this: instead of having done more good than evil, if you are not now a penitent, a believer in Christ, a new creature, you have, so far as your moral nature is concerned, *done no good—you have done nothing right.* Your moral acts and exercises have been all of one kind, and *all evil*, all *wrong*. When this is said, it is not meant that your acts have been evil and wrong in every sense of those words. Right and good, according to the subordinate signification of those words, it is not disputed that you have done; but in the most important sense of the words, their *scriptural* sense, that sense of them in which they will be explained by God and understood in the day of judgment, and that is the *true* sense of them, you have done "only evil," and that "continually." This assertion, though clothed with divine authority, may give offence; but examine it carefully, remembering with whom you have to do.

Right is that which is conformable to the rule which God has given for the regulation of human conduct; that conformity, having for its spring and principle the love of God, and for its object his glory. Now, though you have acted in some things agreeably to the revealed rule of God; yet

has your *motive* been his *love*, and your *aim* his *glory?* It is quite possible to do things required by the law of God, and yet render no acceptable obedience to that law; for they may be done without any respect for the law; done for other reasons than that God requires them; or done rather from fear than love. To do right, is to do *what* God requires, *because* he requires it, at the suggestion of *love*, and with a desire to *glorify him*. To do good, is to do what is pleasing to God; but "without *faith* it is impossible to please him." There are no truly good works, according to the Scripture, but those unto which we are "created in Christ Jesus." "They that are in the flesh," that is, in an unregenerate state, "cannot please God." "I know that in me, that is, in my flesh, dwelleth no good thing." And *it stands to reason* that repentance, in the case of the sinner, must go before all acceptable obedience, and that all good in him must be the fruit and consequence of repentance. In the case of the rebelling subject or child, after the first act of rebellion and disobedience, it is all rebellion and disobedience up to the moment he repents and makes his submission. So it is with all who rebel against God.

Well then, it appears you have done wrong, and *nothing but wrong*. You have done a great deal, and it has all been evil. All the entries under your name, in the book of God's remembrance, are on one side. The other side is a blank. You will never have any thing of your own to be entered there; and the obedience of the great Surety is not entered to your account, because you have not believed on him, and with all your heart confided in him as *your* Surety. So the case stands. This is what you have done. And now,

Consider *to whom* you have done it—*to God*, the great, blessed, and benevolent God, your Creator, Preserver, and Benefactor. You have broken *his* law, which is holy, just,

and good; have transgressed his commandments, which are not grievous; and have refused to render to him that which is your reasonable service.

Consider *under what circumstances* you have done it; circumstances of *light* and *love;* in despite of exhortation and command, admonition and entreaty, promise and threatening, judgment and mercy; with heaven open to allure you, and hell uncovered to alarm you, and the cross of the Son of God in full view before you; you have acted wrong, with every inducement to act right.

Consider also the *evils* involved in such doings, under such circumstances; the presumption and rebellion, the impiety and injustice, the folly and madness, the baseness and daring, but above all, the *ingratitude* of having, under such circumstances, acted as you have acted towards God.

The *ingratitude!* There never was such a case of ingratitude before, and I suppose there never could be another like it. God never *so* loved any other world as to give his only-begotten Son to die for its inhabitants. *Such* goodness does not exist to lead other sinners to repentance. They have no such love to despise. They have no *blood* of atonement to tread under foot. They *cannot* be so ungrateful. The intervention of the Son of God to save rebel *man,* renders his case *peculiar,* and will render his condition hereafter peculiar. He will rise to the highest in heaven, or sink to the lowest in hell. He is the only sinner that ever received a call to repent and return. God never before sought to woo back a wandering soul to him. But for you, O *man,* he has bowed his heavens and come down. He has sent his Son after you. And what have you done? How have you requited God's gift of his Son? How have you met the mercies of redemption? How have you treated Christ? Has his story interested you? Has his cross attracted you? Have you stopped and gone near to see

and sympathize in those unparalleled sorrows, of which you were the *author* as well as the *object?* For he, who died *for* you, died also *by* you. Have you ever looked on him whom *you pierced*, and mourned? Have you given to him your heart? and are you living now to him who died for you? Alas, has he not been despised and rejected of you? Have you not *passed by* him, even if you have done no more?

But some, to all else they have done, are adding this, the last and worst they can do, *the resisting and grieving of the Holy Ghost.* Art thou one of them? They counterwork the divine Spirit, who strives with them. God comes on a visit of mercy to them, and whispers in the ear of the soul, of pardon and heaven; but they say, "Depart from us; we desire not the knowledge of thy ways. Who is the Lord, that we should obey him?" And he departs, perhaps; for he says, "Be instructed, O Jerusalem, lest my soul depart from thee. My Spirit shall not always strive with man." What then? What is their history after that? I know not; but this I know, a dark death and a deep and desperate damnation are the subjects of the last chapter.

Sinner, there is one piece of advice that, as a friend, I would give you. It is, whatever you do, "Quench not the Spirit." You may do any thing but that, and your case not be desperate. But if you quench the Spirit, there remains no hope; there is no refuge left; there is no *fourth* person in the Godhead to undertake the case of the sinner who has wilfully put away from him the light and fire of the divine Spirit. Art thou grieving him? Beware! Another hour—another moment—and he may depart for ever!

I have told you what you have done. Let me now urge you to consider the *consequences* of having done so; the great *guilt* you have incurred, the deep and virulent *de-*

pravity you have contracted, the tremendous *wrath* you have treasured up for yourself, and the utter *ruin* you have entailed on soul and body, for time and for eternity. In doing what you have done, you have destroyed yourself; you have forfeited the divine favor, and lost the divine likeness. The privilege and dignity of being a child and heir of God are gone from you; and peace is gone, and purity is gone, and freedom, and honor, and all but just one only hope is gone, and that is *going*, and unless you lay hold of it will soon be gone, never to return. You have blasted your prospects for eternity. You have caused a blight to come over the beauty and fruitfulness of the soul. You have lost all that was worth having, and have got in exchange nothing but what it is as much your interest as your duty to give up.

You have done what to undo constituted a problem that baffled all created minds. You have done what to undo required a special interposition from the adorable Trinity, and from the Son of God exacted suffering the deepest and most dreadful.

In fine, you have done, O sinner, so *much* that it is necessary you should do *something more*. And do you ask me what it is? Dost thou, in view of what thou *hast done*, ask what thou *must do?* I am glad to hear that question; it indicates returning reason. I will briefly answer it. And,

First. You must do *something*—you must *act;* you will never be saved without your own agency. When the jailer asked this question, did Paul and Silas say, "Do nothing; wait—wait God's time?" A time, by the way, which cannot be *waited* for, because it has come already. It is *now*.

Secondly. What you do, you must do *quickly*. The command of God urges you to *immediate* action. The dif-

ficulty of the work urges you. The uncertainty of life urges you. The ever-increasing hardness of the unregenerate heart affords another argument for doing immediately what you find to do. "Behold, *now* is the accepted time; behold, *now* is the day of salvation."

Thirdly. You cannot be saved by doing any thing which you *may choose* to do, aside from what God commands you to do. No amount of *unauthorized effort* will avail you any thing.

Fourthly. You may do many things which the word of God approves, and even enjoins, and yet never be saved; for no one of them may be that *specific thing* to which the promise of salvation is made.

Fifthly. There is *only one* thing that you can do to secure your salvation. You will be disappointed if you expect to be saved by doing *many* things. One act, one single exercise, is the indispensable requisite to salvation. What is it?

Sixthly. That which you do *in order to be saved,* is not to make an *atonement* for sin, nor is it to acquire, yourself, a *title* to heaven: it is not any act whereby you may make yourself *better,* or recommend yourself to God. There is nothing expiatory, meritorious, or commendatory in what you are required to do. The *object* of the act is not to make atonement, but to receive an atonement already made. It is not to do something for yourself, but to avail yourself of what another has done for you.

Seventhly. It is no *external* act or movement that is required. It is an act of the *soul*—a single, *confiding* act of the soul, the object of the confidence being Christ Jesus. There are two things presupposed as necessary to this act, viz., a sense of your need of him, and an apprehension of his suitableness and sufficiency for you. These existing, you have nothing to do that you may be saved, but heartily

to *trust in him.* "Believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved." Exercise a confiding faith in him, and all is done. Cease to do any thing for yourself, except cordially to trust Christ to do every thing for you.

This is what you must do. Now *do it.* It is reasonable that you should. Christ is altogether worthy of your confidence. He is *able* to save, and he is *willing.* He offers himself to you—he presses himself upon you. Receive him, and you are saved. Do not be confounded by the very *simplicity* of the requirement. Do not say, "Can this be all?" I assure you it is *all.* And there is nothing to be done in preparation for doing this. If you know that you are a sinner, and believe that Christ is a Saviour, then as a sinner trust in that Saviour. And you can do it *now* as well as at any other time; yea, *better.* The duty will never be *different* from what it now is—never *easier. Will you do it now?* Now, while God waits to be gracious, and Jesus stands with arms extended and with open heart to receive you; and the blessed Spirit striveth with you; *now,* when all things are ready, and all circumstances favor; now, in the strength of God, *will you do it?* What is your decision? It is known in heaven. It is recorded there.

NOTE.—A premium of fifty dollars, offered by a friend was awarded to the author of this Tract.

No. 280.

DON'T UNCHAIN THE TIGER.

When an infidel production was submitted—probably by Paine—to Benjamin Franklin, in manuscript, he returned it to the author, with a letter, from which the following is extracted: "*I would advise you not to attempt* unchaining the tiger, *but to burn this piece before it is seen by any other person.*" "*If men are so wicked* with *religion, what would they be* without *it?*"

The doctor was once an advocate for infidelity. He informs us that he was, in his early youth, "a perfect Deist; that his arguments had perverted some other young persons, particularly Collins and Ralph. But in the sequel, when he recollected that they had both treated him exceedingly ill, without the smallest remorse; when he considered the behavior of Keith, another freethinker, and his own conduct towards Vernon and Miss Reed, which at times gave him great uneasiness, he was led to suspect that the doctrine, though it might be true, was not very useful." Franklin's Life, by Key and Mielke, pp. 76 and 77.

Youth and inexperience exposed even Franklin to be led astray by infidel speculations; but age and observation convinced him, first, that they were unprofitable, and then, that their propagation would be like the unchaining of a tiger in a populous city. "*Think,*" said he to Paine, in a letter to which allusion has been made, "*how many inconsiderate and inexperienced youth of both sexes there are, who have need of the motives of religion to restrain them from vice, to support their virtue, and retain them in the practice of it till it becomes habitual.*" He traced his own aberrations from the path of virtue, and the vices of the "young persons" whom "his arguments had perverted," to the absence of religious restraints; and when he saw the youth of his beloved country in danger from the same cause, he bore his solemn testimony against the rash experiment, and entreated his reckless friend to burn the manuscript before it should be seen by any other individual.

Reader, if such a man as Franklin, after trying infidelity himself, and carefully noticing its effects upon others, deprecated it as the bane of personal purity and social order and happiness, are you willing to give it currency in our great republic?

Infidelity, if it prevails in this country, must be substituted for Christianity—for the religion of the Bible. This religion, its enemies themselves confess, is, in its moral code, *holy, and just, and good.* In its doctrine it is dignified and glorious. In its tendency it is pure and peaceable, gentle, and easy to be entreated, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality, and without hypocrisy. The celebrated Montesquieu remarks, "*The Christian religion, which ordains that men should love each other, would without doubt have every nation blest with the best political and civil laws; because these, next to religion, are the greatest good that men can give and receive.*" Spirit of Laws, London edit., vol. 1, p. 72. The congress of 1776, speaking of the same religion, declared that it was the "*only solid basis of public liberty and happiness;*" and Gen. Washington calls it "*one of the great pillars of human happiness, and the firmest prop of the duty of men and citizens.*" Having such a religion as this to form the habits of our youth, to guide the councils of our statesmen, to teach our senators wisdom, and prepare our citizens to appreciate the mild institutions of our republic, what could we be profited by exchanging it for deism or atheism, in any of their modifications?

Infidelity would indeed break down our altars, and take away our Bibles and our Sabbaths. It would shut up the Sabbath-schools, and turn into the streets more than a million of children, who are now taught the pure morality of the Gospel every Sabbath-day. It would bereave the living of his rule of life, and rob the dying of his only antidote against the fear of death. But what would it bring us in return? Its doctrines are vague speculations, founded neither on data nor evidence; and in these speculations scarcely any two are agreed. Some believe in the existence of a God, while others deny it. Some believe in the immortality of the soul, while others, with the French philosophers, write over the gates of their cemeteries, "*Death an eternal sleep.*"

Nor have infidels any more certainty or any better agree-

ment among themselves, in regard to their moral code, than their doctrinal speculations. Lord Herbert and the Earl of Shaftesbury thought that the light of nature would teach all men, without the aid of revelation, to observe the morality of the Bible. Spinosa and Hobbes, two other distinguished infidel writers, the one believing in the existence of a God and the other denying it, were agreed that *there was nothing either right or wrong in its own nature; but that every man has a natural right to obtain, either by force or fraud, every thing which either his reason or his passions prompt him to believe may be useful to himself.* Blount, another freethinker, supposed that *the moral law of nature justified self-murder;* and Lord Bolingbroke, that it enjoined polygamy, and neither prohibited *fornication, adultery, nor incest, except between parents and children.*

But the vagueness and uncertainty of its doctrinal speculations, and the looseness and immorality of its rules of life, are not the only things to be objected against infidelity. Its *tendency*, wherever it has been introduced, has been evil, and only evil.

France, at the commencement of her revolution, in 1789, was an infidel nation. The profligacy of the Catholic priesthood, the demoralizing example of the Regent Duke of Orleans, and the infidel publications of Voltaire and his associates, had produced a contempt for religion through every rank of society. The people were taught by their *literati* that the Bible was at war with their liberties, and that they could never expect to overturn the throne till they had broken down the altar. Here THE TIGER WAS UNCHAINED. The lusts and passions of men were set free from the restraints of Christianity, and the bloody history of that devoted nation should convince every man that infidelity has done her no good, but much evil.

France needed a revolution as much as America did, and had she engaged in it with a pious reliance upon God, and with the hearts of her people deeply imbued with the morality of the Bible, the scion of liberty, carried by her honored Lafayette from this country, would have taken deep root, and cast forth its branches; and before this time the fairest portion of Europe might have reposed under its shadow. But her principles had poisoned her morals, and her immorality disqualified her for being free; and after

expending an incredible amount of treasure, and sacrificing more than two millions of men, she consented to be ruled by a despot, in hope of some protection from herself, and some security from the TIGER which she had unchained.

Nor was infidelity in France more friendly to individual and domestic purity and happiness than to national liberty. Its prevalence caused such a dereliction from virtue, that in 1801, when the rage of the revolution was over, and the government settled in the hands of Napoleon, the single city of Paris reported 4,881 illegitimate births, 720 divorces, 8,258 deaths in poorhouses, and 201 found dead in the streets. In 1803, the prefect of police reported to the grand judges that there were, in the same city, 657 cases of suicide, 150 of murder, 604 divorces, 155 executions, 12,076 common prostitutes, 1,552 kept mistresses, and 308 licensed brothels. Here we see the effects of infidelity upon a refined and enlightened people. There is no other conceivable cause why France is not this day a mighty and happy republic. There was no cause why 720 wives should be divorced from their husbands, and 4,881 daughters become the wretched mothers of illegitimate children, in one year, in a single city, but that the restraints of Christianity were taken off from the people.

With such facts before us, let Americans decide, not merely as Christians, but as patriots and fathers, whether they will embrace the pure Gospel of Jesus Christ, tendered to us from heaven, and sealed by his blood, that "whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life;" or whether they will become accessory to the crime of banishing the restraints of religion and a sound morality from our mighty republic. Religion has made our country free. It has made our sons industrious and moral; our daughters virtuous and happy. Under its purifying influence, our land has become the glory of all lands. Shall we now exchange this heavenly religion, which supported our fathers in the struggle for independence, and taught their sons how to be free, for that dark and cheerless system, which covered with crime and deluged in blood the only nation by which it was ever publicly embraced?

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THE

ALMOST CHRISTIAN.

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It is probable that the person who takes up this Tract, will be at once reminded by its title of some one or more in the circle of his friends, to whom the designation *Almost Christian* will apply: and there are few evangelical pastors who could not readily refer to many examples in illustration of this subject. We speak not now of that large, undefined, and varying class of which king Agrippa may be considered a fit representative—men who, having grown up in infidelity and vice, uniformly regardless of their obligations to God, and deaf to the invitations of the Gospel, are at length, in some favored hour, suddenly aroused from their stupidity, and constrained, under a partial view of their ruined condition, to exclaim, "Almost thou persuadest me to be a Christian." We speak rather of those whom we think of when we read the affecting narrative of our Saviour's interview with the amiable young ruler, and those who were, imperfectly indeed, represented by the scribe to whom the assurance was given, "Thou art not far from the kingdom of God." Such persons are not unfrequently met with; and they seldom cross our path without exciting a peculiar interest in their spiritual welfare. We "look upon them and love them," as our blessed Saviour did in one of the instances just cited; and when we find them reluctant to exchange the paltry riches or honors of this world for the friendship

of Christ and a crown of unfading glory, we feel something of that commiseration which he felt when the young man "went away grieved" at his call of infinite love.

There are, of course, minor diversities of character amongst the individuals to whom the name Almost Christian may in this sense be applied; but they possess certain prominent traits in common. The following outline exhibits some of these characteristic features; it is drawn from real life; and though it will doubtless require to be varied, in order to suit particular cases, it is perhaps sufficiently definite to enable each one who reads it to determine whether he belongs to the class of Almost Christians.

1. They are more frequently to be found in the middle and higher walks of life, than among those whose pecuniary circumstances have precluded them from enjoying many intellectual and religious privileges.

2. They are usually the offspring of pious parents, or at least members of families in which religion is sincerely respected, and its leading doctrines inculcated upon the minds of the young. This remark, however, admits of considerable modification, inasmuch as many persons who have failed of receiving this instruction in childhood, have subsequently been brought to possess the character which we are endeavoring to delineate.

3. They are for the most part persons of intelligence—many of them of highly cultivated minds, stored with the fruits and embellished with the accomplishments of a liberal education.

4. They are almost uniformly characterized by much amiableness of temper; and their kind and affectionate demeanor so wins upon the heart, that we cannot know them without according to them the tribute of our sincere esteem. Especially is this the case when we observe that this kindness of heart prompts them to many acts of benevolence; and that they appear to derive much of their own enjoyment

from promoting, by little offices of attention and love, the happiness of those around them.

5. The class we speak of profess the fullest belief in the Holy Scriptures, and approve of most of the doctrines there revealed. They are regular attendants at the sanctuary, and some of them are not ashamed to be seen at social prayer-meetings. Many are Sabbath-school teachers or members of Bible-classes. A few of them go so far as to study the Bible with considerable diligence, and even to offer up an occasional prayer in secret. They are not averse to the society of Christians. Their deportment is generally correct; and they sometimes exhibit a degree of conscientiousness which might well reprove some who are within the pale of the church. They profess to rejoice in the increase of revivals and in the conversion of their friends. They freely admit that personal religion is indispensable to the true enjoyment of this world, and that it furnishes the only adequate preparation for eternity. They acknowledge, however, that they have never availed themselves of the gracious offers of the Gospel, and have no personal interest in the great Redeemer.

Such are some of the distinguishing marks of the Almost Christian. The sketch is indeed very imperfect. The reader may perhaps feel that a part of the description is applicable to his own case, while the remainder is not. His character may be less fair and his deportment less exemplary than that here delineated: while cherishing a sincere respect for religion, he may neglect many even of its external duties; and while vaguely wishing that he were a Christian, he may have no precise views of the nature of that obedience which the holy law of God requires. But whatever peculiarities of this kind may mark your case, allow one who would if possible benefit your soul, affectionately to solicit your serious attention to the remarks which will now be offered with reference to the preceding statement.

I. *The qualities which have been ascribed to the Almost Christian may, and in fact do, coëxist in his heart with determined enmity against God.* It is very important for you to remember, that the term Almost Christian is one devised by man, and not by God; and that the ground of its application to you is not that of internal purity, but of outward decency. In that discriminating classification of mankind which the Bible makes, only two descriptions of persons are recognized, saints and sinners, believers and unbelievers, the holy and the unholy. It is the peculiar trait of the former that they love God; and, in this case, the absence of love is aversion or hatred. "He that is not with me," said our Saviour, "is *against* me;" and "he that loveth father or mother more than me, is not worthy of me." But you do not even pretend to love God; and as love to God is the first and great commandment, and "the fulfilling of the law," it follows not only that your heart *may* be, but *must* be full of enmity towards your Maker. If it be true that the law of God is spiritual, reaching even to the thoughts and intents of the heart, then no external obedience can be acceptable to him which is not founded on a just apprehension of his authority and a sincere reverence for it. Those acts of courtesy and kindness, therefore, that sweetness of manner, that respect for religion, and that rigid observance of many of its public and perhaps some of its private duties, however commendable in themselves, are perfectly compatible with a state of wilful and perverse rebellion against the infinite Jehovah.

It is exceedingly difficult to convince many persons of the truth of this assertion. They will admit, in words at least, that the eye of Omniscience is fixed upon the heart, and that every act must necessarily be offensive to him which he perceives is not prompted by an internal principle of obedience to his righteous law. Still they are ready to ask, whether so much decency of behavior, so many deeds

of charity, and a uniform course of life so widely different from that pursued by the great mass of the world, are at last to come into condemnation and fail of an eternal reward. It is obvious that a point is virtually denied in this inquiry, which the objector a moment before conceded ; for no plausibility of statement and no ingenuity of reasoning can invalidate the conclusion, that if God approves only of such acts as spring from sincere love to his character and law, no acts to which this essential quality does not belong can be acceptable to him. Let the case then be ever so strong—let one be found who can exclaim with all the mistaken ardor of the young ruler, and with reference to the whole decalogue, "all these have I kept from my youth up," yet without love to God as the foundation of his obedience, his religion will be "as sounding brass or a tinkling cymbal."

It is obvious, then, that if you are but an "Almost Christian," you are still in the bonds of iniquity. Notwithstanding all your amiableness, your hatred to God is yet unsubdued. And rest assured, that where this feeling prevails, there is no true virtue. There may be the semblance of it, but there cannot be the reality. That single mark evinces that the whole heart is dreadfully corrupt. Nothing which is good can grow in such a soil: as well might we expect the ground which is shaded by the deadly Upas to produce nutritious fruit for the sustenance of man.

II. *The Almost Christian is peculiarly liable to self-deception.* His situation is one which not only indisposes a person to self-examination, but absolutely unfits him for performing this essential duty with any tolerable degree of fidelity. He furnishes perhaps the most striking illustration of the unmeasurable deceitfulness of the human heart, which is to be found in a Christian community. There are indeed exceptions to this remark, amongst the large class who are designated by the term Almost Christian; but, as a general thing, it is believed they are miserably mistaken

in regard to their true character. Not by any means that they firmly believe themselves to be real Christians, and much less that they express that opinion: they universally acknowledge, when asked the question, that they have never experienced the saving efficacy of the blood of Christ upon their hearts. Still, it may be doubted whether they are not self-deluded in the very act of making these confessions—whether they are so utterly destitute of hope as they profess to be. The heart which has not been humbled and sanctified by grace is seldom disposed to bring its excellence to the severe tests exhibited in the Scriptures, or to view its own deformity in the mirror of the Gospel. And it is plain that the man who takes no pains to learn what his true character is, will be strongly inclined to form too favorable an estimate of himself. Especially will this be the case if he is conscious of possessing those amiable qualities which secure for him general esteem, and if his life is stained with few violations of those rules of honesty and sobriety which, however improperly, are by common consent, in all civilized countries, invested with the authority of a code of morals.

It is hardly possible that one so situated should scrutinize his own heart with that impartiality which is demanded alike by a regard to his personal safety and by the requisitions of eternal justice. To imagine that he can look without a sinful self-complacency on all his acts of kindness and charity, and that he will be disposed impartially to examine these actions and the general tenor of his life by the pure light of revealed truth, is to suppose that he has already been taught those lessons concerning the depravity of the heart which are only to be learned by sitting at the feet of Jesus Christ. Considering what human nature is, is it surprising that he should be flattered, by the caresses of friends and the concurrent approbation of all around him, into a secret and firm, though perhaps unacknowledged belief,

that even God himself looks down upon him with a feeling of complacency? Such an impression is so favorable to peace of mind, that we may presume there is a predisposition to receive it; and it would be cherished and confirmed by that frequent, though only half-designed comparison, which the Almost Christian is so prone to institute between himself and his less exemplary neighbors and associates.

Perhaps the reader has, in some honest moment, detected himself in this specious kind of self-gratulation; and if he will but candidly examine this single act, it will open to him the ground of that delusion which is threatening to destroy his soul. *He appeals to some other standard than the word of God in order to determine the true character of his actions.* But of what account is it, with reference to the retributions of eternity, how blameless your life may be in the judgment of men, provided your heart is not right in the sight of God? It obviously concerns you to know how your conduct appears in the eyes of him who is to deal with you according to your works, and fix your everlasting destiny at the great day of account. Every other inquiry is totally irrelevant until this be settled. If God has solemnly decreed that "without *holiness* no man shall see the Lord," you are running a fearful hazard by building your hopes of heaven on the favorable estimate which men, frail and sinful like yourself, may form of your character. You deny, indeed, that you are trusting to any such foundation. You assert that nothing is further from your belief than the opinion that your good works will wholly or partially avail to save you. But beware of yourself. Search deeply into your heart, and see if you do not discover, beneath all your apparent humility and self-renunciation, an *under-current* of pride and selfishness, which is silently but rapidly bearing you towards the "lake which burneth with fire and brimstone."

Nor is the Almost Christian less erroneously deceived

in regard to his prospects of becoming pious. If he is not actually indulging a secret hope in the mercy of God, he flatters himself that he is approaching that point at which sovereign grace will surely interpose for his deliverance. He practically believes that the course he is pursuing, though not precisely coincident with the "strait and narrow way," is gradually converging towards it, and will in due season conduct him into it; or else that the two paths are so near together that, in case of any sudden calamity, as an attack of sickness or the like, he can step, at a moment's warning, from his own into the other. He perceives that there is reason enough why the vicious and profane, the sensualist and the drunkard, should be promptly arrested in their downward career; but why should *he* be alarmed who "has been growing better and better for years?" It is well to go and try to collect together the Israelites who are scattered all over the desert, and in danger of being cut off by their foes; but why disturb the peace of one who is living on the very bank of Jordan, and can at any time cross over to the land of promise and repose? Strange, strange infatuation—to think that sin can tend to holiness; that a life of rebellion against God is qualifying a creature for heaven; that a heart which is daily abusing offered mercy, and crucifying anew the Saviour, is softening rather than hardening in its iniquity! O throw off this delusion. Tear away the veil from your eyes. Look at yourself as you are. *Believe* that "he who is not with Christ, is against him;" that he who is not "laying up treasure in heaven," is "treasuring up wrath against the day of wrath;" and that every hour you persist in impenitence, is strengthening the fearful probability that you will at last fail of eternal life.

III. *The state of the Almost Christian is one of aggravated and increasing guilt.* It has already been shown, that with all his apparent amiableness he still cherishes bitter enmity against God, and we shall now endeavor to prove

that his sin is of no ordinary stamp. This will be manifest, if we examine his conduct in the light of that simple and equitable principle of the divine administration—a principle which we recognize in all our dealings with one another—that "unto whomsoever much is given, of him shall much be required." Now, according to the view which we have taken, the Almost Christian is one to whom this maxim will apply in all the plenitude of its meaning. He has not only enjoyed the common bounties of Providence and the means of grace, but he has been mercifully restrained from flagrant sins, educated in the fear of the Lord, and taught to cherish a sincere respect for the ordinances and interests of religion. While thousands around him have grown up like heathens in a Christian land, his mind has been stored with sacred truth, he has been instructed in lessons of virtue, and pious friends have been constantly near to impart their counsel and to direct him in the path of duty. More than this, he has been led by divine grace to reflect much and seriously on eternal things; he has been convinced of the reasonable claims of God upon his heart; he has been brought to acknowledge that his course of life is irrational, sinful, and dangerous; he knows that there is salvation for him only through the atoning sacrifice and righteousness of Christ, and that unless he repent and believe in him he must inevitably perish.

All this has been done for him—all this he knows—and yet does he still persevere in resisting all the calls and motives to repentance. He looks upon Sinai: he sees its lightnings, he hears its thunders: the law is proclaimed, and he confesses that it is "holy, and just, and good;" but he refuses to render to it any other than a cold and formal obedience. He looks upon Calvary: he beholds a scene which filled all heaven with wonder—which made the rocks to rend, the graves to open, and the dead to come forth; but no tear of penitence starts from his eye, no pang of godly sor-

row thrills his heart. Though confessing that Jesus was the Son of God, yet he will not obey him—that he is altogether lovely, yet he will not love him—that he died to save sinners, yet he will not be saved by him. He hears the proffer of rest to the weary and heavy-laden, but he refuses to appropriate it to himself. He knows that there is a "fountain opened for sin and for uncleanness," but he will not repair to it. He believes in the assurance that those who need, can have "wine and milk without money and without price;" but, while acknowledging his need, he is too proud to accept the boon.

And what more *could* he do to aggravate his guilt? What more could be done to bring him to Christ? From Sabbath to Sabbath, from year to year—perhaps all the while flattering himself that he is drawing nearer and nearer to the kingdom of heaven—he lives unmoved alike by judgments and mercies. He perhaps sits side by side in the sanctuary with some avowed, and, it may be, profligate opposers of religion; and while their hearts melt under the power of the truth, his own, as though encased in iron, but too fatally wards off every shaft. The same afflictive providence which is the means of arresting and awakening many of his companions, leaves no permanent impression on his mind. He is ready, indeed, to sympathize with the bereaved, and to alleviate their sorrows by all the kind offices of friendship; but he forgets that the stroke which has clad them, and perhaps himself also, in mourning, was mercifully designed to direct his wandering heart to the Saviour.

The writer is well aware that the opposite effects here spoken of are, in an important sense, referable to the divine sovereignty; nor would he pen a single sentence which might seem to be in the slightest degree inconsistent with that great, and, to the Christian, most precious doctrine. But, however that doctrine may be explained, all the guilt which has been charged upon the Almost Christian lies

most justly at his door. And for proof of this, let the appeal be made to his own consciousness. If such an one is now perusing this Tract, let me ask whether a single unrighteous allegation has been advanced against you in these remarks? Does not the Bible, by direct assertion or obvious implication, confirm, in your own judgment, all that has been said respecting the true character of your depraved heart? And do you not acknowledge that the preceding enumeration of your sins is in no other way incorrect, than as it fails in representing fully their number and their heinousness? If this be so, then, truly,

IV. *The condition of the Almost Christian is one of awful danger.* It is so, because of the hardening effect of his sins upon his heart. By his own confession, he sins against much more light than other men, and therefore he must make a more wilful resistance to the truth. The Gospel is a savor of life unto life, or of death unto death, to all who hear it. The man who rejects one solemn and pungent appeal on the subject of his soul's salvation, is thereby fortified, in a measure, against a second; and he who rejects a second, will be better able to resist a third; and in this gradual manner do multitudes so completely arm themselves against the messages of God as to make their own destruction sure.

Again, the Almost Christian is in great danger, because, by persisting so wilfully in impenitence, he may grieve the Holy Spirit until he depart from him. That men are sometimes thus given over to the workings of a reprobate mind, is a doctrine dreadful indeed to contemplate, but too plainly taught in the Scriptures to be overlooked. It is God who speaks in such language as the following: "My Spirit shall not always strive with man." "Because I have called, and ye refused; I have stretched out my hand, and no man regarded; but ye have set at naught all my counsel, and would none of my reproof: I also will laugh at your calam-

ity; I will mock when your fear cometh." Prov. 1. "If thou hadst known," said our blessed Saviour to Jerusalem, even while he wept over it—"if thou hadst known, even thou, at least in this thy day, the things which belong unto thy peace! but now they are hid from thine eyes." And again, "Thou knewest not the time of thy visitation." Luke 19. Who, then, are so likely to be thus forsaken of God, as those with whom his Spirit has been long striving; who have been faithfully instructed, admonished, warned, entreated to repent and believe in Christ; and who, notwithstanding the flood of light which has been shed upon their path, and the unnumbered mercies of God, are still abusing his goodness, and trampling on the blood of his Son? Beware, lest you provoke his wrath, and he swear that you shall not enter into his rest.

There is still another circumstance which adds to the danger of the Almost Christian, resulting from the gross deception which, as we have seen, he is constantly practising upon himself. He has so long reflected on the solemn truths of the Gospel, that he listens to them without *expecting* them to make any deep impression on his mind. He is not surprised to see others affected even to tears under the faithful preaching of the word, but he would look upon *himself* with astonishment, should the same exhibition of the truth excite in his own bosom any strong emotion. His respect for religion remains undiminished, his external conduct is still blameless, his attendance on public worship regular, and his conscience, perhaps, tender; but there is a sameness, a *uniformity* in his feelings, throughout successive months and years, which may well excite painful forebodings as to the end of his course. He often wishes that he were a Christian; but he has no wish strong enough to carry him beyond the unvarying circuit of his daily life. He is frequently serious; but his seriousness never rises to genuine conviction and abhorrence of sin. He often feels

solicitous about his soul; but he is never sufficiently alarmed to make the trembling inquiry, "What must I do to be saved?" How little prospect, then, humanly speaking, is there that he will *ever* awake, in this life, to the realities of his condition. Nor is it to be forgotten that his state is becoming more alarming every day. It is only in appearance that he is stationary. He is every hour, as we have already seen, becoming more hardened in sin, and more confirmed in impenitence.

We appeal, therefore, to the Almost Christian, whether he is not encompassed with dangers. It is a small matter, that in the estimation of your own flattering heart, or of partial friends, you may have no cause for anxiety about your soul. Are you not still under the curse of the law? Is not the sword of God's justice impending over you, and his wrath ready to burst upon your head? Is not your soul in dreadful peril? You are walking blindfold upon the verge of a tremendous precipice. Death hastens on; the judgment-bar of your offended Saviour is just before you; time is bearing you rapidly along to the retributions of eternity, and the only preparation you are making, is a preparation for endless exclusion from the presence of God and the joys of heaven. Are you ready for this doom? Can you meet it with composure? Or does the thought of it inspire you rather with a desire to avoid it? Are you disposed now to seek reconciliation with God on the terms which he has prescribed in his holy word? If you are, I will endeavor briefly to point out your duty.

You need not be told that there is but one way of salvation. "Except ye repent," said our Saviour, "ye shall all likewise perish." "Believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved." Repentance and faith are as requisite for you as they were for a Mary Magdalene or a Saul of Tarsus; or as they are now for the vilest wretch who bears the form of man. You are aware that repent-

ance includes godly sorrow for sin, a forsaking of every sinful habit, and a firm determination to walk with God, in the ways of new obedience; and that faith includes a receiving and resting on Christ alone for pardon and salvation. It is your duty at once to renounce every other dependence, to give up all reliance on your amiableness of temper and exemplary conduct, as recommending you to the favor of God, and to come humble and contrite for your sins to Jesus Christ. Cast yourself on his mercy; receive him as your Saviour; and commit your soul and all its concerns to him, for time and for eternity. Do this *now*. You have trifled with religion too long already. The Bible has no promise for you beyond the present moment. It requires *immediate* repentance and the immediate exercise of faith.

To all this you will probably answer, "I have often endeavored to give myself up to Christ in the way here described, but I have never been able to get a clear view of my own sinfulness, nor have I *felt* sufficiently the burden of sin."

On this I would remark, first, this only evinces the dreadful depravity of your heart. Your sins are, on your own confession, of a highly aggravated nature, and yet you do not feel them. But again, the Almost Christian very frequently commits a mistake in regard to the character of his exercises. He invariably fixes upon a *high degree* of conviction of sin, as an indispensable prerequisite to his accepting the offers of mercy. And thence his plea, when urged to renounce the world for Christ, uniformly is, "I do not *feel* enough to take this step yet." Now, it is true, that without the conviction of your ruin by sin, there can be no evangelical repentance; yet, as this conviction is itself, when real, the work of the Holy Spirit, it is not for a worm of the dust to declare that he will persist in rebellion against his Maker, until he is favored with an overwhelming view of his own depravity. Again, he should remember

that many persons have more pungent convictions at various seasons after their conversion, than they had at the precise period of it. And again, it is well known that persons whose character and education correspond to the description given in the foregoing pages of the Almost Christian, if converted at all, are often brought into the fold of Christ without experiencing those highly wrought exercises which frequently attend the conviction and conversion of the abandoned and profligate. Still, it is evident that until you are led by the Holy Spirit to feel, in some measure, your need of a Saviour, you will not repair to him.

But why are you not sensible of your need *now?* To this question you have correctly replied, that you have no just view of your own character—no clear apprehension of the momentous truths of the holy Scriptures. Were those truths once brought home to your heart, you could no more remain unmoved than could Belshazzar when he beheld the mystical hand-writing on the wall of his palace. Should the Spirit of God apply them to your conscience with all the directness and force of a "*Thou art the man,*" you would instantly throw aside your pride, and formality, and unbelief, and cry out in agony of soul, "What must I do to be saved?"

But the question still remains, Why do you *not* realize the import of these solemn truths? why are you still blind to your own wickedness? why are you not now within the ark of refuge? Simply, under God, because *you have never been* IN EARNEST *to secure the salvation of your soul.* If you were obliged to cross a rugged mountain, you would not expect to pass it by making weak and irregular efforts, by alternate seasons of activity and idleness, of encouragement and despondency. And if you expect ever to reach heaven, no partial, unsteady, and inconstant exertions will avail. Millions perish because there is no period at which they are ready solemnly to vow before God, "NOW, *from* THIS MO-

MENT, *I will, in dependence on divine grace, seek supremely the honor of Christ in the salvation of my soul and the extension of his kingdom, and make every thing else subordinate to this great end.*"

Are you ready NOW to make this solemn consecration of yourself to God? If so, do it on your bended knees, in his immediate presence. And once done, let there be no shrinking back—no misgiving. "Remember Lot's wife." Having put your hand to the plough, one look behind may cost you a crown of glory. The world will tempt you—friends may ridicule you. Regard them not. Let all the energies of your mind be devoted to the great question at issue between your soul and your Maker. Separate yourself, as far as possible, from ensnaring company; let not the perplexities of business draw your heart away from God; banish every thing which might distract your attention. Reflect on the merciful providences which have marked your history, and let these excite your *gratitude*. Above all, *look to the bleeding Saviour*. Think of his agony in the garden—his bloody sweat—his crown of thorns—his piercing cry, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?"—his pouring out his soul an offering for sin, that "*whosoever* believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life." Implore the Holy Spirit to take of the things of Christ and show them unto you; to sanctify you; to strengthen you in duty. He will give you the victory over every spiritual adversary, preserve you to the end, and "present you faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy."

No. 282.

DAVID BALDWIN;

OR,

THE MILLER'S SON.

THE father of the youth who forms the subject of this narrative, is a respectable miller in the county of Kings, Long Island. He has for several years occupied one of those numerous mills moved by the tide waters of the ocean, which stand along the bays indenting the south-western shore. The wide expanse which these locations present to the eye, the tumultuous roarings of the ocean, with the occasional terror and majesty of the storm, are calculated to give a philosophical, if not a religious turn to the reflecting mind.

David Baldwin, who died April 5, 1833, aged 22, was brought up at one of these mills. His opportunity for education was only that of a common school. But breaking

through the disadvantages of his situation, he made very respectable attainments. With the exception of the Latin and Greek languages, he surpassed in general knowledge most of the youth who issue from our collegiate institutions. The powers of his mind were of the first order. Strongly intellectual, he was able to grapple with any subject to which his attention was given. In the accomplishment of his purposes he was unbending, and immovably tenacious of the opinions he embraced; nevertheless he was kind and condescending in his feelings, sober, quiet, and industrious in his habits.

The constant resort to his father's mill by the inhabitants of the adjacent country, rendered it a position extremely favorable for exerting an extensive influence; but most unhappily, as it appeared to us, for the interests of religion and for the souls of many who admired his talents, he embraced that system of opinions which regards the Bible as a fable, and Jesus Christ, our blessed Saviour, as an impostor. These sentiments absorbed his whole mind, and completely warped his understanding, in other respects remarkably good; he became thoroughly versed in the whole system of infidelity; he knew all the objections and arguments which for two hundred years infidels have been using against the Bible. Over these he pored by night and by day; he knew which were strong and which were weak. Indeed, it is rare to find a Christian more thoughtful, or one who studies his Bible with so much care as he studied the arguments and objections which infidels have brought against it.

How long since he embraced these sentiments we are unable to say. Some time since, passing from his father's house after conversing with the family, I perceived him standing at a little distance by himself, and stepping aside, addressed a few words to him on the subject of religion.

He immediately replied, that his views on that subject were very different from mine.

As time and circumstances did not then admit of discussion, and knowing his vigorous powers and unyielding nature too well to believe that he would surrender his opinions without an effort, I requested an interview with him at some future day. To this he assented.

Having an errand soon after to the mill, I found him alone, and then, with no other ear to hear than the ear of Jehovah himself, and no other eye upon us than that which searches the heart, our discussions commenced. These were continued in the same place from time to time for several months, until we had travelled, step by step, over the whole system of infidelity.

Hume's argument, alleging that miracles were not susceptible of proof, he seemed to regard as his strong hold. After I had thought its sophistry, its want of philosophical soundness, even in its first principles, had been clearly exposed, he would still cling to it with a pertinacity plainly showing it to be a cherished favorite.

At one time, while earnestly engaged upon the external evidences of divine revelation, he remarked with energy, that he would not believe the Bible to be the inspired word of God even if there were external evidence sufficient to sustain it.

"Why not?" I inquired.

"The matters contained in it, and recorded as facts," he replied, "are so unreasonable, so inconsistent, so foolish, and so much at issue with all our ideas of truth and propriety, that no man unblinded by superstition or prejudice can possibly believe them."

"What are these facts?" I asked; "will you name some of them?"

He mentioned several, but soon fastened upon the con-

version of Saul of Tarsus, showing by his comments that he viewed it as the most extravagant of them all.

I replied, that it was a fact as well attested as any other fact in history, and although there was something unusual in the occurrence, there was certainly nothing unreasonable. As you acknowledge God to be the creator of the human soul, there can be nothing unreasonable in saying that he has power to renew or change that which he had power to form. If he fashioned it once, he must surely have power to fashion it again, or turn it whithersoever he will.

Here he reverted immediately to the doctrines of Hume, saying that such a conversion must be a miracle, and miracles were not susceptible of human proof.

In one of those excursions I was frequently making to the mill, the weather was extremely boisterous; the roads were filled with mud, and ice, and snow; a blackening train of crows were beating in the adverse winds above, whilst endeavoring to make their way from the adjacent island to the main; every thing around was calculated to fill the mind with gloom. When I arrived, I said to my young friend, with a serious air, "I was thinking, as I came along, what a gloomy world this is. It appears to be so full of difficulty and trouble, I had concluded that, if your views were correct, it would be much better for us to administer to each other a portion of some fatal drug that would lay us asleep for ever: it will only be a sleep, you say, and why not sleep at once? After we have struggled through difficulty and sorrow for years, you tell us it will only be a sleep at last: if so, I can see no reason for continuing the struggle any longer."

When he recovered from the first emotions of surprise, he replied, "We must take the bitter with the sweet."

"But the sweet is of short duration, the bitter seems

to constitute by far the largest portion of the cup," I continued.

Seeing to what conclusion it must inevitably come, he adroitly returned the question, saying, "Will you please to tell me first what sustains you?"

"Hope," I immediately replied—"the hope of blessedness to come sustains us; but you have no hope, you are constantly looking into the earth as the end of your being: on your principles you can hope for no higher destiny than that which pertains to the mere animal creation; but we think our present afflictions are not worthy to be compared with the glory to be revealed."

At another time I asked him what advantage the world would gain, should these principles be universally embraced. They produce no hope, but take away many wholesome restraints. Taking away the Bible would be lifting the floodgates of vice.

"I know it," said he; "the world is not yet sufficiently philosophical to endure the change."

"Unless," said I, "the fountain of vice in the heart is dried up by the operations of that Eternal Spirit whom the Bible reveals, I fear these days of philosophical liberty can never arrive."

On another occasion, whilst deeply occupied upon this all-absorbing subject, I asked him if infidels ever prayed.

He said "he thought not; he never knew one that did, nor had he ever heard of an instance."

"Are infidels, then, independent of their Maker?"

He replied, "No."

"Is it not then unreasonable, is it not contrary to the common sense of mankind, that dependent creatures should never thank that Being on whom they always depend? What would you say to see a poor suffering fellow-creature by the wayside, ready to perish, and a man of wealth and

benevolence passing by, touched with compassion, kindly supplying his wants—what would you say to see him receive the gift, and turn away with dumb sullenness from the kind giver?"

"I would say he was ungrateful, he ought to thank his benefactor," he replied.

"What would the common sense of mankind say?"

"It would say so too. But," continued he, "the case is not parallel; our thanks can add nothing to the glory of the Almighty, he is so far above us."

"Neither could the thanks of the miserable being add any thing to the wealth or respectability of his kind benefactor. But what is duty? And now, David, I wish to ask you a particular question, and I know your integrity too well to believe you will deceive me in the answer. Do *you* ever pray?"

After some hesitation, his countenance at the same time betraying the emotions within, he answered, "No, I do not pray."

"Then I think reason must decide that that religion which leads the soul to God must be right, while that which leads it away from the Source of all good must certainly be wrong."

I placed in his hands Faber's Difficulties of Infidelity, Leslie's Short Method with the Deists, etc. Paley's Evidences of a Divine Revelation he told me he had read. But, after all that had passed between us, the details of which, if written out, would fill a large volume, he still remained inflexibly firm. He appeared to be as immovable as the man who had placed his foundation upon a rock.

Believing further discussion unprofitable, I told him it must be left to affliction and death to test the truth and value of our respective principles; and here we ceased to agitate the question.

In the meantime a disease with which he had been afflicted increased, and finally assumed the consumptive form. He was constrained to relinquish business, and was soon entirely confined to the house.

During his confinement I called several times to see him, inquired after his health, and conversed with him respecting every thing else than that which held the deepest place in my heart. From a few hints which he inadvertently dropped in the course of these conversations, I perceived that his views were unchanged.

As the spring advanced his disease made alarming strides, he was thrown upon the bed, and all hope of recovery was given up. He had been one week in this situation when I called on him.

On entering the room I readily perceived that the hand of the last enemy was upon him, and taking my seat by the side of his bed, I affectionately inquired how he was.

Said he, "I am fast sinking; it is impossible that I should recover; but I am resigned to my fate, or to the disposal of the great God of nature."

I observed, "that resignation was good under such circumstances, if it were well founded; but in order to have any thing valuable in it, it must rest upon some sure foundation. A resignation founded upon the word of God, the hopes and promises of the Gospel, must surely be good for a dying man; but if you cast away the Bible, your resignation rests upon nothing but your own carnal reasonings or vain imaginations."

"Every man has his opinion," said he; "the Mohammedan has his opinion, the Jew has his, you have yours, and I have mine."

"That may be," I replied, "but still it does not make all our opinions equally wise or safe. As these opinions are contrary to each other, some of them must be wrong:

and now, if yours are right, David, all the rest of us are just as safe as you are; but if yours are wrong, O how awful the thought! What a mighty difference death must make between you and us."

"Hush, hush!" he exclaimed with vehemence, averting his face to the opposite side of the room, his whole system at the same time becoming greatly agitated.

His anxious mother, agonizing for the salvation of her son, cried, "David, David, why will you do so?"

Turning again, he replied to his mother, "What else can I say? I am too weak to listen to such things now."

Waiting until his feelings had in some measure subsided, I said, "David, this is not weakness, it is conscience; I have often seen Christians much weaker than you are, converse for a whole hour upon the promises and the hopes of the Gospel; I have seen them contemplate with delight the glory hereafter to be revealed: but you seem to be easily disturbed; you appear to have but little confidence in your own system; it does not bring you any comfort in the prospect of death."

"Trouble me no more," said he; "you could not convince me when I was well, it is in vain to think of doing it now I am sick: do not come here to disturb a dying man; let me die in peace."

I told him "I had not come to argue, I had come to preach Christ and him crucified, the only way of life, the only hope of a resurrection from the dead and eternal blessedness beyond the grave. I have not come because I am desirous of giving you pain; I came to seek your eternal good. I never have felt any thing but kindness towards you; in all our arguments you never saw me manifest any other feeling."

"That is so," said he, "I never did."

"And now, David, with regard to your dying in peace,

that cannot be. For you to die in peace, as you now are, is utterly impossible. There can be no peace, saith my God, to the wicked."

"You ought to have charity," said he, with emotion; "it is a poor religion that does not produce charity."

"I would most gladly have charity for you if I could," I replied; "but I cannot have it; my Bible will not permit me to have it: my Bible declares, 'he that believeth shall be saved, but he that believeth not shall be damned.'"

"That is hard," said he.

I continued my discourse, saying to him, "I would take great pleasure in administering comfort, if it were in my power so to do; but I know of no way in which a minister of Christ can comfort a dying man but by presenting the consolations of the Gospel. These, David, you have cast away—you have cast away the Saviour, and trampled the blood of the covenant beneath your feet. How can I comfort you? Strong as is my desire to do so, you place it entirely beyond my power to offer you one drop of consolation."

"I hope then," said he, "you will not distress me."

Perceiving his feelings much agitated, I desisted. After pausing until he was somewhat composed again, I said, "David, shall I pray with you?"

He hesitated for a moment, and then answered, "No. The great God of nature cannot be changed by man's prayers. He is immutable."

"Nevertheless," said I, "he has declared himself to be the hearer of prayer and the rewarder of those who diligently seek him. He has said, they that seek shall find—they that ask shall receive—and unto them that knock it shall be opened."

"You may think so," said he, "but I think otherwise."

After another considerable pause, in which not a word

was spoken by any person in the room, nor any thing heard but the sighs occasioned by a mother's and a sister's anguish, I said to him, "David, I must now take my leave of you. But shall I ever come to see you again?"

He looked earnestly in my face, and with an expression of kindness, he slowly said, "If you will come and see me as a friend."

"Then you do not wish to see me as a minister of the Gospel?"

He answered distinctly, "No."

"But seeing I sustain that office," I replied, "I cannot reconcile it with my sense of duty to visit a dying man without presenting the only hope God hath provided for the dying. If I come to see you, I must preach Christ and him crucified." So saying, with painful emotions I bade him adieu.

On retiring, his mother requested me to pray with the family and the friends who were present in the adjoining room, to which I readily assented. And when she had set his door open, we lifted up our souls in earnest supplication to that God who has the hearts of all in his hands, and is able to turn them whithersoever he will. It was a moment of indescribable solemnity. A son—a brother—a beloved and admired friend, was about to take his flight to the world of spirits, unreconciled to God, at enmity with Jesus Christ, accounting even his precious saving blood as an unholy and a hateful thing. We earnestly besought the Lord to have mercy on his soul—to scatter the delusions of Satan—to subdue his enmity—to give him light, and to give him life.

After prayer I took my leave of the family and deeply afflicted parents, promising soon to return, for I was still unwilling to give him over as lost, whilst any portion of his day of grace appeared to remain. Returning home, I pon-

dered upon all that had past. I felt exceedingly pained and disappointed at what I had witnessed, and said to myself, "O who hath believed our report, and to whom is the arm of the Lord revealed? Is the Lord's arm shortened, that it cannot save; or his ear heavy, that it cannot hear?"

A little after sundown the same day I was surprised at the reception of a note from a member of the family, requesting my immediate attendance. I readily obeyed the call. David was very desirous of seeing me, and in a few minutes I was there.

When I came in, his father said, "David has been exceedingly distressed since you were here. I perceived, during the day, that he rolled and tossed from side to side, groaning as if in the greatest anguish, and I said to him, 'David, what is the matter?' 'O,' said he, 'I have no pain of body, but I have such awful distress and agony of soul.' Was this distress occasioned by the conversation this morning?' 'O, yes,' said he; 'I once thought I could die in peace, but now I find I cannot.' To his mother he afterwards said, 'O what a poor prodigal I have been! Can you not pray for me, mother? Will you not pray for me?' He also requested us to send for you, which we immediately did."

When I entered his room he looked up in my face and said, "I have been deeply distressed since you were here this morning."

"What has given you so much trouble?" I affectionately inquired.

"O," said he, "that question respecting the Saviour."

"Then you begin to lose confidence in the opinions you have embraced?"

"Yes," he replied, "they bring no comfort to the soul; they do not sustain me. A Saviour is necessary. Is there salvation for me?"

I answered in the affirmative, and began at once to present the fulness and the freeness of the gospel offer, and to exhibit the ability and willingness of our Lord Jesus Christ to save sinners, even the chief. For this purpose I recited many passages of Scripture, such as, "Ho, every one that thirsteth"—"Come, and let us reason together"—"Let the wicked forsake his way"—"He that believeth shall be saved"—"Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved." In order to give him a view of the nature of Christ's substitution in the room and stead of sinners, the only means by which we can be delivered from the burden and condemnation of sin, I read and expounded, as far as time would permit, the fifty-third of Isaiah, and also the fifth chapter of Paul's Epistle to the Romans. He listened attentively to all that was said. Like the new-born babe, he seemed to desire the sincere milk of the word, to be entirely subdued and humbled in spirit; and when I concluded, he said with emphasis,

"These are comforting truths."

"But will you believe them?" I inquired.

"O yes, I will try to believe them."

I then asked if I should pray with him.

"Most certainly," he replied, "I should be glad to have you do so."

We then united in prayer around his dying bed with feelings widely different from those we had experienced in the morning. We thanked the Lord for his mercy and compassion to the children of men. We earnestly besought him that the good work, which we trusted was begun, might be carried on to perfection; that the youth before us might be made a rich trophy of God's free, adorable, and matchless grace.

At the close of the prayer he said aloud, "Amen, so let it be."

When I came again on the following morning, as he had desired me to do, the family told me he had requested his sister to be called before day to read the Scriptures for him, and that he himself had engaged in prayer. To my inquiries respecting the state of his mind, he said,

"There is one thought that particularly troubles me. I have rejected Christ—I fear Christ will reject me."

I continued, as I had done the preceding evening, to present Christ in all his fulness—his willingness and his sufficiency to save. I read and remarked upon several passages of Scripture. He seemed to catch every word with eagerness. He complained of no weakness—no fatigue. He did not seem to droop or grow weary. The infirmities of the body appeared to be forgotten in his eagerness to gain the bread of life for his soul.

When I had concluded, he said, "I have endeavored to cast myself entirely on the mercy of God, as manifested in Jesus Christ. I can trust to no other."

After prayer to the throne of grace, which he closed as before, by saying Amen, I left him.

The next time I came to see him, he said, "I am like Saul of Tarsus. The scales have fallen from my eyes; I can now understand by experience what that conversion means; I can now see what before was involved in darkness. I feel that Jesus Christ is precious. How could I have died with my former views, and without an interest in Christ? It is painful to think of." He seemed now to regard the principles of infidelity with the deepest abhorrence, and to look with wonder and gratitude at the fearful gulf from which he had escaped.

I inquired if his former views had ever given him peace or comfort.

He replied, "Not any. I have tried hard to extract comfort from them, but I could never obtain it." He then

related to me a long conversation which he had held that morning with a neighbor, for whom he had sent, and who had for some time past entertained similar views with himself. "I told him," said he, "that the philosophy we had been cherishing could not sustain the soul; it could not stand the test of death. I have had to abandon it, and if ever you die happy, you must abandon it also."

I observed to him "that there were a great many who professed to adhere to infidel principles in this place, and if my life is spared, I shall most probably have an opportunity of addressing them. What shall I say to them from you?"

"Tell them," said he, "that philosophy will not sustain the soul in the prospect of death—it contains no support for the dying man; that now is the time to give it up, and to become reconciled to God through Jesus Christ. Whilst my life remains, I will do what I can to correct the evil myself."

On quitting the room his mother told me that he exacted a solemn promise from her that she would burn all his infidel books, so that no other person might be poisoned by them in the manner he had been.

Contrary to the expectation of all, he continued eleven days from the time this extraordinary change took place. During this time he was seen by many individuals, and to all who conversed with him he gave the most decisive evidence of a change of heart and a precious work of grace wrought in the soul. All the exercises of his mind seemed to be of a highly devotional character. He kept his sister constantly employed in reading the sacred Scriptures. In the Psalms of David he greatly delighted, saying at the same time that all the rest of the Bible was good.

After a portion of Scripture was read to him in the morning, he would engage in prayer for himself and the

family. He delighted greatly in this duty. After long conversation with his physician respecting his former and his present views of the Christian religion, he requested him to pray. At the close of the prayer, he said with emphasis, "What a blessed privilege Christians enjoy, in offering up the desires of their hearts to God in behalf of poor sinful worms of the dust!"

He continued in the manifestation of hope and confidence in the Redeemer until he breathed out his soul, as we trust, in the Lord Jesus Christ, and ascended to those regions of light and blessedness whence all errors and delusions will be for ever excluded.

From this simple narrative the reader cannot fail to perceive how utterly unstable the strongest human foundation becomes in the hour of trial. With judgment and eternity in view, it becomes as movable as the sand swept away by the flood. No foundation will stand the test or give comfort to the soul but that which God has laid. That foundation has stood the test of ages. No one resting thereon ever found himself disappointed, or said at last he was deceived. The nearer they have approached the fearful crisis, the more confidence they have felt in the truth of God and the saving efficacy of his precious Son. When that awful hour draws nigh, so far from requiring their Bibles to be burnt as delusive books, their Bibles become more dear to their souls. When the world recedes, when flesh faints and the heart fails, they look up with confidence to Him who hath promised to be the strength of their hearts, and their portion for ever. Thousands in all ages, trusting in Christ, have died thus. They have met that, which has always been the king of terrors to the wicked, with calm composure, holy joy, triumphant faith, singing victory even amid the throes of death.

But take away the Lord Jesus Christ, the only name

given under heaven whereby we can be saved, and what is left to bear up the soul? When the sorrows of death encompass it, and the pains of hell begin to take hold upon it, what can sustain it? Can the force of human reason, or the value of human merit? Ah, no. Had it been in the power of human reason or human merit to do so, our young friend would have been amply sustained. His intellectual perceptions were strong and clear—his mind was enlarged—the habits of his life were irreproachable—his industry extracted all the sweets which the system of infidelity contained, and yet he freely confessed that he never experienced peace until he found it in Jesus Christ.

In view of these facts, why will men indulge such a delusive hope? The language this youth employed to those whom he called to his dying bed was, "Give it up. If you would escape the sufferings and anguish I have endured, give it up." And if any reader is cherishing this awful delusion, we would say, Give it up. If you would escape that tremendous gulf into which all the unbelieving will be cast—if you would gain an inheritance in that kingdom into which all the faithful of God shall be ultimately gathered, give it up and embrace the Lord Jesus Christ, as he is freely offered to you in the Gospel.

No. 283.

ALARM TO THE CARELESS.

INDIFFERENCE to religion in a rational being cannot but excite surprise and occasion grief in every serious mind. Religion is an infinite reality; the Gospel is worthy of all acceptation; its claims are high and paramount to every other; and we cannot but know that in an unexpected moment we may be called to give an account of the deeds done in the body. And can any be found in these circumstances indifferent to their highest interests? What can be said to one who cares for none of these things which the infinite God has revealed, into which the angels desire to look, which are not vain—either doubtful or unimportant—but of unutterable value, and will stand when heaven and earth shall pass away?

I entreat your serious attention while I present some reasons *why* you ought to be alarmed.

1. The fact that you *are careless* is ground of alarm. It is evidence that you do not reflect upon God. One hour's solemn meditation upon his omniscience, his purity and righteousness, would break up your apathy. Did you think of your relation to him, his goodness to you, your obligations to him, you could not be at ease. Ought you not to be troubled that you are surrounded by Jehovah, every moment liable to be summoned to his bar, and still indifferent—asleep in your sins? Your carelessness is evidence that you are ignorant of your true condition in the sight of God; for who that realizes the guilt of transgression, the holy nature and fearful penalty of the law, and feels that he has broken that law and incurred that penalty, will not tremble? There is something truly awful in false security, where the danger is real and great. Who does not pity the poor victim of intemperance, who has just passed the line that decided his character as a drunkard? He still cries, There is no danger. He dreams of happiness and respectability while the hand of death is upon him; his

fancied security is the most alarming symptom: could he feel his danger, there would be hope; but this he *will not* see, and his indifference is the touch of death.

Who that had seen the prodigal amid his cups and revels, reckless of his approaching ruin, would not have wept over his guilty thoughtlessness? If just then he had been admonished of his danger, he would doubtless have replied in anger, as the sinner often does, "Your sympathy is uncalled for; my resources are not exhausted, nor do I intend to become the slave of indulgence; an occasional liberty may be taken without hazard." Ah, how little did he know of the wiles of the destroyer! He was then undone, but he had not yet come to himself to see it.

And such is your condition, careless sinner, but you know it not. A disease is upon your soul; it has penetrated your nature through; and yet you are whole in your own estimation, and need not a physician. Your very apathy is the darkest symptom.

You are condemned—the sentence of death lies against you—and yet you feel secure. Just in proportion to the character of the sentence, the nearness and certainty of its execution, is the fearfulness of your indifference. If it were a temporal loss it could be borne, apathy would not be so appalling: but when we remember that the sentence against you is eternal death; that God is the Judge who pronounced it; that this very night your soul may be required, we know not how to express our sense of the criminality of such carelessness.

2. Another reason of alarm is, *that this indifference indicates a state of mind in which every blessing is abused, every warning neglected.* The sinner's heart is represented by the barren heath which knoweth not when good cometh; which receives the sweet showers of heaven, but makes no return. While this apathy remains, the goodness of God may be lavished upon you, the blessings of Providence may fall around you, the kindness and love of God our Saviour may be shown you, and no gratitude spring up in your heart. Should it not trouble you to have such a heart? Is not such a state of mind truly deplorable? A habit of body that would render every thing received for nourishment or for medicine perfectly useless would be dreadful; what then must be that moral disease which leads men to pervert

every gift, to turn away from every overture, to resist every motive? Every prayer you hear leaves you far from God; every chapter of the Bible read is without effect; every sermon you hear, every funeral you attend, leaves you still in love with the world. Thus all the means which a merciful God employs, accomplish nothing for your highest good; and this because you are careless.

3. You ought to be troubled when you reflect what it is you are careless about—*salvation.* The man indifferent about his health is unwise enough; the man regardless of his temporal interests can expect little commiseration; what then shall be said of him who by neglect hazards the salvation of his soul? You are now on trial for eternity. Christ has died that you might live—salvation is offered in his name—indifference is unbelief. In an hour you think not you may be called to your account; by mere neglect you may lose heaven; eternal death is the fruit of a careless life, and this you may incur before to-morrow. What infatuation, thus to expose immortal interests when nothing is to be gained. O, ye careless, awake from sleep; you have too much at stake thus to slumber. If you would but pause, you could not fail to see the inconsistency of being so eager after the vanities of this world, while you are negligent of the realities of the world to come; of being so intent upon the acquisition of wealth that may take to itself wings and fly away, while you are indifferent about the true riches; of grasping after momentary honor, while you let go immortal glory.

4. Another cause of alarm is *the exposure of your present condition.* Neglect of the Gospel insures destruction. "How shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation?" Many think, if they escape those outbreaking sins which bring ruin upon men in this world, they are in no danger of the fearful gulf; but this is a fatal mistake. Careless sinner, if you had never uttered a falsehood, injured a neighbor, or stained your hands with a single trespass against society, you would still be in the gall of bitterness; your apathy is a crime for which no morality can atone. You have never thought enough of God to love him, or of Christ to follow him. Were you to die in your present state, your alienation of heart, your indifference to religion would exclude you from the kingdom of God. Nor would there be

any thing arbitrary in this. A heart insensible to the claims of the Gospel, and unmoved by the affecting scenes of Calvary, in such a world of ruin as this, surely is not meet for the inheritance of the saints. Were you, therefore, not to commit another sin, were you to remain stationary as to moral character, you must be lost. By all that is heart-rending in the idea of banishment from God, in the thought of lying down in everlasting sorrow, I would arouse you to reflection, and entreat you to lay these things to heart.

5. Another consideration is, *no more powerful means will be employed to awaken you to the concerns of your soul.* Consider what God has done to induce you to seek him. His words are full of emphasis, calculated to seal up every mouth and sweep away every excuse: "What could have been done to my vineyard that I have not done? How often would I have gathered you, and ye would not." That you might know God, his works have been spread out before you; that you might early serve him, parents and teachers have instructed you from the first dawn of moral being; that you might be convinced of sin, the piercing light of the law has shined into your heart; its high and holy precepts have been placed beside your conduct, that you might mark your deficiency; that you might escape the wrath of God, the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world has been set forth as the propitiation for sin. Ministers have preached, Christian friends have entreated, the Holy Spirit has been sent to visit your heart, and still you are careless about the most solemn subject in the universe. Are you waiting to be moved? There is enough now bearing upon you to excite half the heathen world. The presence of one missionary moves all Burmah. The heathen have heard that there is an eternal hell, and they are afraid; but you sit unmoved. They have learned that there is an eternal God, and they desire to know him; but you say, Depart from us, we desire not a knowledge of thy ways. They ask for Tracts, while some here will not receive them into their houses. They regard with unspeakable interest a servant of Jesus Christ, and will take a three months' journey to enjoy the privilege of listening to his words; while you will suffer him to stand and stretch forth his hands without heeding his message. Ah, the poor heathen will rise up in the judgment and condemn you.

O, ye careless ones, what shall be done to disturb your deep slumbers? If one rising from the dead would not make *those* hear who had Moses and the prophets, what *new* thing, or solemn thing, shall be said to those who, in addition, have Christ and the apostles? There is every reason to fear you will still sleep on. The fact that you are on the slippery brink of ruin, on the sides of a volcano ready to burst forth, does not alarm you; the fact that God stoops to warn you, and that he will not send another Gospel, or make another display of his love before you, excites no interest. We are ready to exclaim with the prophet, "O that my head were waters, and mine eyes a fountain of tears, that I might weep day and night" over the stupidity of sinners.

6. This carelessness is *increased by indulgence, and confirmed by habit.* A long process of hardening the heart is gone through with, before such a state of perfect apathy is reached. What saith the Scripture? "Can the Ethiopian change his skin, or the leopard his spots? Then may ye also do good, that are accustomed to do evil." A deceived heart turns the sinner aside, so that he cannot deliver his soul, nor say, Is there not a lie in my right hand? A state of indifference, induced by the habit of neglecting the Gospel for years, will not be easily broken up. Novelty, which is a powerful auxiliary to truth, is lost upon such. If the mighty works which Christ wrought in Chorazin and Bethsaida, but which lost their effect by repetition, had been done in Tyre and Sidon—heathen cities—the first impression of such stupendous power had struck every mind—they *would have repented.* And if the same truths which sinners hardened under the Gospel reject, were delivered in the name of Christ to many in the waste places of the earth, they would doubtless turn to the Lord.

This indifference of which God complains is *voluntary. Go thy way,* said Felix to Paul; *when I have a convenient season I will call for thee.* He made his seriousness yield to his convenience. Who will say he was under a necessity to dismiss the apostle? He says no such thing. He might have taken a different course; and so might you have done, careless reader; for you were not always as indifferent as you now are. When eternal things were pressed upon your regard, when the truth of God was felt, or a solemn provi-

dence filled you with seriousness, when you were agitating the question whether you should arise and go to your Father with the prodigal's confession, who will say that an iron necessity bound you to the fatal course you took? What but a perverse will led you to dismiss your fears, to abandon your closet, to forsake the meeting for social prayer, to prefer the world? Ah, you must know that you acted deliberately; you would not come to Christ that you might have life; and now, if you die in your sins, if the Spirit of God never again awaken you, if you are left to the sleep of spiritual and eternal death, it will be for ever true that God called, and you refused; that he knocked at your heart, and you would not open to him; that he stretched out his hand, and you would not regard him; that he sent his ministers to beseech you to be reconciled, and that you hated knowledge, and despised all his reproofs.

7. Another reason why you should be troubled is, *this carelessness is a state of mind that provokes God to withdraw his Spirit.* This indifference springs from deep depravity; it is deeply *criminal.* If the heart were not deceitful above all things and desperately wicked, men would not be so insensible to divine things. In heaven there is no apathy; there ought to be none on earth. The truths of God possess sufficient interest to excite every sensibility, to awaken every power. Must it not offend the Author of this record, to say that he has failed to reveal himself in a way to interest his creatures? They can be interested; a romance, a fictitious scene, a work of the imagination can hold them waking till midnight, while the Gospel is nodded over, or wholly neglected. Ah, the cause is not in the inspired record, but in the heart; it is "enmity against God." Men reject Christ, "because their deeds are evil;" and continuing to reject him, they are in danger of being given up to incorrigible hardness of heart. All habits gather strength by repetition. The man who sinned against his conscience the last Sabbath, will be more likely to sin against it to-day. He who stifled conviction *then,* is probably more disposed to do it *now.* In this way God is provoked to leave him. His Spirit will not always strive with man. The sinner first sinks into indifference before he sinks into judicial sleep. O how many who were apparently not far from the kingdom of God, relapse into stupidity, and never wake out of it.

They have eyes, but they see not; their ears are dull of hearing, their hearts have waxed gross, so that they will not turn to the Lord. Woe unto you when God departs from you. This is no uncommon case. In ancient times God said, "My people would not hearken to my voice; so I gave them up to their own hearts' lusts." If unbelief under the Old Testament dispensation thus provoked him, how must he regard those who reject his Son? Says Jesus Christ, "O that they had known, in this their day, the things which belong to their peace; but now they are hidden from their eyes." God spake to the heathen, says the apostle, so as to take away excuse even from them; but they refused to hear, and their punishment is thus described: "Because they liked not to retain God in their knowledge, he gave them up to a reprobate mind." What then will he do to those who turn away from him who speaks from heaven?

8. Let me say, in conclusion, *your indifference will ultimately be broken up, and will aggravate your condemnation a thousand fold.* The wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all unrighteousness of men; and though the retribution sleep, it will come, and will not tarry. The measure of iniquity may be long filling up; but when it is full, the judgment will be inflicted. The Jews were spared forty years after the Saviour wept over their devoted city, and in the midst of his tears pronounced the irreversible sentence; but the cloud burst at length and swept them away.

And, careless sinner, you may be continued—the Sabbath may dawn upon you, the voice of prayer may fall upon your ears while you sleep securely in your sins; but the summons of death will come: "Give an account of thy stewardship, for thou mayest be no longer steward." You may reject the Gospel and despise its overtures, but *that* summons you cannot reject, *that* mandate you cannot despise. Your dream of delusion will then be dissipated; the awful realities of the judgment will produce a conviction which will deepen for ever; the trial of the last day, and the chains and darkness of the eternal prison, will convince you that God is righteous when he judgeth.

O, to awake in despair, and find, from the actual infliction of God's wrath, what an evil thing it is to sin against him; to know by irreparable loss the value of blessings de-

spised, of atoning blood trampled in the dust, of grace rejected. How will it imbitter the soul to dwell upon scenes passed through during a probationary season. The light that now shines will add deeper shades to the darkness of the pit. Recollection will be an endless source of misery to the lost. "Son," said Jesus Christ to the man in torment, "REMEMBER that thou in thy lifetime receivedst thy good things." What words can express the anguish of a soul thus reminded of lost opportunities? "O, had it not been for my foolish pride, I might now be robed in purity at God's right hand: but I would not yield to truth—I contended with God, and justly perish." Let these lamentations from the world of woe now rouse you to throw off this lethargy that settles upon you; call upon God—cast yourself at his feet—and from this hour act for eternity; for if you wrap yourself in the delusion that to-morrow shall be as this day, in such an hour as you think not, the avenger of blood may be upon you. And will you run the desperate hazard of having this great work to perform on a dying bed? Delay, and your "dreadful end" may only furnish another warning to such as "forget God." But give him your heart now, and life shall be peace, death a welcome messenger, and your eternity a scene of unmingled happiness and triumphant glory.

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LYDIA STURTEVANT;

OR,

THE FATAL RESOLUTION.

AN AUTHENTIC NARRATIVE.

BY REV. ELIAKIM PHELPS, D. D.

Lydia Sturtevant was the name of an amiable young lady of my acquaintance, who died at the age of sixteen. She was the daughter of respectable and pious parents in one of the New England states. On the cultivation of her mind considerable attention had been bestowed. Buoyant in spirit and beautiful in person, she was the pride of her parents, the ornament of her circle, and the admiration of all who knew her.

To what extent her mind had been imbued with religious truth in childhood, I have not been able fully to learn. It is certain that, from her earliest years, she had regarded religion with respect, and had entertained the expectation of becoming a Christian before she died. It is not known, however, that she was the subject of special religious impressions until the summer of 1824. During the months of July and August of that year, her mind was solemnly impressed, and she felt that it was unsafe to continue in the neglect of religion any longer. One morning, especially, the first impression as she awoke was, that she must embrace religion *then;* and that her soul was in imminent danger of being lost if she delayed. She saw herself, as she

expressed it, "to be a great sinner, in the hands of a God of justice"—saw that there "was no hope but in Jesus Christ—that in Christ there was a full and complete salvation—that he was ready and willing to receive her *then*, and that delay would probably be fatal to her soul." She deliberated; she reasoned; she prayed, and finally made up her mind to the deliberate RESOLUTION, *that she would repent and accept the offer of salvation* before the close of THAT DAY. She did not actually repent then, but *resolved* that she *would* do it *that day*. This resolution was, as she believed, the solemn and deliberate purpose of her soul; and she felt a degree of satisfaction in the thought, that the question of her eternal salvation was now so near a final and favorable adjustment. But the day had its cares and its pleasures; business and company filled up its hours, and the night found her as thoughtless, almost, as she had been for months.

The next morning her religious impressions were renewed and deepened. She saw, more clearly than before, the danger of her condition, and the necessity of immediate repentance. Sin now appeared more exceedingly sinful; she reproached herself for violating the resolution of the previous morning, and in agony of soul, better conceived than described, formed *another resolution*, as she expressed it, "*to begin religion before the close of that day.*" And with this the anxiety of her mind again subsided. The violated vows of the previous morning gave her some uneasiness; she felt not quite the same confidence in herself that she did before; but she had now formed her resolution so firmly, she was so fixed in her purpose, that she considered the issue could hardly be any longer doubtful; and the agony of her soul gave way to the soothing reflection that she should soon be a Christian. She had now taken, as she imagined, "one step"—had formed a solemn purpose, and had given a pledge to repent *that day*. She felt,

as she expressed it, *committed*, and hardly had a doubt as to the accomplishment of her purpose. This day also passed away as before. She did, indeed, several times during the day, *think* of her resolution, but not with that overwhelming interest she had felt in the morning, and nothing decisive was done.

The next morning her impressions were again renewed, and she again renewed her resolution; and it was dissipated as before; and thus she went on resolving, and breaking her resolutions, until at length her anxiety entirely subsided, and she relapsed into her former state of unconcern. She was not, however, absolutely indifferent; she still expected and resolved to be a Christian; but her resolutions now looked to a more distant period for their accomplishment, and she returned to the cares and pleasures of the world with the same interest as before.

About this time she went to reside in a neighboring village, and I did not see her again for about three months, when I was called at an early hour one morning to visit her on the bed of death. Her last sickness was short—of only five days' continuance. So insidious was its progress, that no serious apprehensions were entertained as to its issue, until about eight hours before her death; and no anxiety for her salvation, up to this hour, appears to have occupied her mind. About daybreak, on the morning of the day she died, she was informed that her symptoms had become alarming, and that her sickness would probably be fatal. The intelligence was awfully surprising. It was an hour of indescribable interest to her soul. A solemn stillness reigned around. It was at the early dawn of day, just about the hour at which she formed what she emphatically called THAT FATAL RESOLUTION, a short time before. The opening twilight, the chamber in which she lay, every object around brought to mind her former resolutions, and in a moment

all the horrors of her situation filled her soul. She now saw herself a hardened sinner, in the hands of God—impenitent, unpardoned—without hope—at the very gate of death—her Saviour slighted, the Spirit grieved and gone, and the judgment with its tremendous retributions just before her.

For a moment suppose her case your own. Time, that was given her to prepare for eternity, was gone. Health, strength, flattering hopes, were gone. The insidious disease had made such rapid inroads, that her blood was already beginning to stagnate, and her lungs to falter in the work of respiration. Feeble and faint, and racked with pain, just sinking in death, what could she do for her soul? And yet *do* she *must*, now or never; for in a few short hours, it would be for ever too late. At one time her distress became so intense, and her energies so exhausted, that she was forced to conclude her soul lost—that nothing could now be done for it; and for a moment she seemed as if in a horrid struggle to adjust her mind to her anticipated doom. But O that word LOST. It was a living scorpion to her deathless soul. Her whole frame shuddered at the thought. She struggled again for life—raised her haggard eyes, and seemed to summon every effort to pray. O what agony did that prayer express! She called, she begged, she importuned for mercy, until her weak frame gave way, and she sunk into a partial swoon. A momentary delirium seemed then to distract her thoughts; she appeared to dream that she was well again, and spoke wildly of her companions, and her employments, and her pleasures. But the next moment a return of reason dissipated the illusion, and forced back upon her the dread reality of her situation—just trembling on the verge of the pit—just sinking, as she several times affirmed, to an endless hell.

At this awful thought her soul again summoned strength—again she cried for mercy with an agony too intense for her weak frame, and again she fainted. It was

now nearly noon. Most of the morning had been employed either in prayer at her bedside, or in attempting to guide her to the Saviour; but all seemed ineffectual: her strength was now near gone; vital action was no longer perceptible at the extremities; the cold death-sweat was gathering on her brow, and dread despair seemed ready to possess her soul. She saw, and we all saw, that the fatal moment was at hand, and her future prospect one of unmingled horror. She shrunk from it. She turned her eye to me, and called on all who stood around her to beseech once more the God of mercy in her behalf.

Turning at one time to her distressed father, as he sat beside her, watching the changes of her countenance, she said, with a look such as parents alone can understand, "O, my dear father, can't you help me?—can't you keep me alive a little longer? O, pray for me—pray for me." We all kneeled again at her bedside, and having once more commended her to God, I tried again to direct her to the Saviour, and was beginning to repeat some promises which I thought appropriate, when she interrupted me, saying with emphasis, she "*could not be pardoned;* it was *too late—too late.*" And again alluding to THAT FATAL RESOLUTION, she begged of me to charge all the youth of my congregation not to neglect religion as she had done; not to stifle their conviction by a *mere resolution* to repent. "Warn them, *warn them,*" said she, "by my case"—and again she attempted to pray, and swooned again.

Her voice was now become inarticulate, the dimness of death was settling upon her eyes, which now and then, in a frantic stare, told of agonies that the tongue could not express. The energies of her soul, however, seemed not in the least abated. The same effort to pray was manifestly still continued, though it was indicated now rather by struggles and expressive looks and groans, than words. She continued thus alternately to struggle and faint, every

succeeding effort becoming feebler, until the last convulsive struggle closed the scene, and her spirit took its everlasting flight.

As I retired from the scene of death, I was led to contemplate and write down this brief history of that lovely female, whose state was now unalterably fixed. But a few weeks before, she was within the reach of hope, and promise, and Gospel influence, a subject of deep and solemn conviction. The Saviour called, the Spirit strove; she listened, deliberated, RESOLVED. But alas, her resolution fixed on a *future* period; and although it was but a few hours distant, it afforded time for "the wicked one to catch away that which was sown in her heart." The circumstance which quieted her conviction, and perhaps *prevented* her repentance, was her *resolution* that she *would repent;* or, as she more than once expressed it, "THAT FATAL RESOLUTION." Had she *actually repented* and embraced salvation *then,* instead of simply resolving that she *would do it,* her death, though in the morning of her days, might have been peaceful and triumphant, her memory blessed, and her immortality glorious.

But how was it that a *resolution* to *repent* and become a *Christian*—a resolution so solemnly adopted, and to be executed so soon, could have led to a result so disastrous? The answer is clear. We see in this case the deceitfulness of the human heart, and the dark device of Satan. Instead of yielding to conviction and repenting at once, she was quieted by her resolution, until the cares and pleasures of the day could have time to come in and take possession of her soul. Her resolution was so firmly made and so soon to be accomplished, that she felt in a measure secure, and her anxieties subsided. The resolution that she *would* repent that day calmed her apprehensions, and thus removed from her mind the most powerful stimulant *to do it now.* The effect upon her conscience was that of a deceptive and dead-

ly opiate; it lulled to a fatal slumber, to be broken only by the angel of death.

How many, as we have reason to fear, are going down to the pit under the same delusion. Impenitent reader, is not this your case? Why are you so unconcerned? Is it not that you are *purposing* to repent hereafter? Would you—could you be content to live one day, one hour, in this unprepared state, if you had not some such opiate to stupefy conscience, and perpetuate its slumbers? Suppose it were now revealed, that in a few short hours death would be upon you, would you not be awakened? Would you not with great earnestness seek the Lord while he might be found? But what real difference is there between the condition here supposed and your actual condition now? Death is certain to come. Why, then, when the fact that you must die ere long is so certain, why do you feel so little solicitude to be prepared? With the tremendous alternative of heaven or hell appended to your decision, what satanic delusion holds you in fatal slumbers?—what but this delusive *purpose* to repent *hereafter?* Take away this, and the vain hope which hangs upon it, and would you slumber? No more than you would slumber under the trumpet of the last day.

The deceptive influence, then, of this *resolution*—this mere purpose to repent, can at once be seen. It perpetuates that insensibility which threatens, even now, your soul's eternal ruin. No matter how *firmly* you may *resolve* to repent hereafter; the more *firmly* you resolve, the more imminent, perhaps, is your danger, for the greater is the probability that you will trust in it, and that conscience will be silenced. No matter how short the period before your resolution is to be accomplished. Though it were merely "to go and bury your father," or "bid them farewell that are at home at your house;" if it admits *a single half hour* of delay, it involves a hazard for which the wealth of king-

doms would not compensate. It is a wilful delay of *repentance now commanded;* it may lead to diverting company or care; it may grieve away the Holy Spirit; it may be that sin, for which all the sighs, and groans, and tears of a world could not atone. This mere *purpose* to repent has been long enough peopling the world of perdition. It is one of the darkest devices of Satan. It is not to be trusted, even for an hour. It is like the pilgrim's "enchanted ground;" he who sleeps there, sleeps in the gate of death. If religion will *ever* have any value, it has that value *now*. If its sanctions ever *will* be binding, they are binding *now*. If the Most High ever *will* have a claim to your obedience, he has that claim *now*. The business of religion is a business to be *transacted*, not to be trifled with or delayed. It requires not simply your purposes, or promises, or resolutions, but the immediate surrender of your heart, a cheerful submission of *your will* to the word, and Spirit, and holy will of God; a cordial acquiescence in the method of salvation through Jesus Christ. It is a concern in which no man's *word* can be taken, even for an hour. Not even the most solemn *vow*, if it fix only on a future period, can meet that high and holy injunction which "*now* urges *all men everywhere to repent.*" O then, by the awful majesty of that God who thus "commands"—by the tremendous decisions of his last tribunal—by the amazing worth of your own soul—and above all, by the infinite love of Him who has died for sinners, be constrained to REPENT NOW.

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WHAT IS

A CALL TO THE MINISTRY?

BY REV. JAMES D. KNOWLES.

LETTER I.

My dear Brother—I need not assure you that the subject on which we recently conversed is deeply interesting to my mind. The inquiry, *Is it my duty to preach the Gospel?* is one of the most important that can occupy your attention. I have wished that some person competent to the task would furnish the church with a judicious treatise on this topic. It would be most gratefully received by hundreds of young men, whose minds are agitated by doubts concerning their duty. Such a treatise, too, would be a valuable assistant to pastors, both by reminding them of their duty to the young men in their respective churches, and by aiding them to perform that duty. The churches also need instruction respecting their obligations to seek out and cherish the gifts which may exist among their young members. But as such an essay has not yet appeared, you will allow me to suggest a few thoughts on the subject.

It gives me pleasure to know that you agree with me on the point, that *sincere love to the Saviour* is the first and indispensable qualification. If I had doubt whether you have been "born of the Spirit," I could not think of you in reference to the ministry, but should rather feel it my first duty to beseech you, in Christ's stead, to be reconciled to God. A man who has not scriptural evidence that his

heart has been renewed, may be *sure* that it would be presumption to intrude himself into the ministry. No monarch would employ a rebel as an ambassador. Much less will the Saviour appoint an impenitent sinner to proclaim his Gospel. To such a man the words of the psalmist may be most emphatically applied: "Unto the wicked God saith, What hast thou to do to declare my statutes, or that thou shouldest take my covenant in thy mouth? seeing thou hatest instruction, and castest my words behind thee."

But, while I believe you to be a true Christian, I must exhort you, before you proceed further in your inquiries concerning the ministry, to "make your calling and election *sure*" by a faithful application to your own soul of the scriptural tests of conversion. That it is possible to arrive at a well-grounded persuasion of our adoption—that we may "know that we have passed from death unto life"—that we may enjoy the "full assurance of faith"—is indisputable. Every Christian perhaps experiences occasional eclipses of his hope, because he is betrayed into sin, which darkens his understanding and disturbs his peace. But this is a different thing from that perpetual overshadowing of the soul of which some professing Christians complain. They have some light, but the rays struggle through a cloud. They enjoy some hope, but it is faint and wavering. They have a little peace, but it is often disturbed by fears. Such a doubting believer is not qualified to plead the Saviour's cause with men. He cannot confidently urge others to believe, while he himself has only a feeble faith. He cannot speak persuasively of the excellence of that religion, the consolations of which he does not himself enjoy. He cannot comfort the mourner, guide the inquirer, and remove the doubts of the perplexed. The young man, then, who is inquiring concerning the ministry, must examine himself, not merely to be satisfied that he is a Chris-

tian, but to ascertain whether his faith is sufficiently firm to enable him to go onward in the toils and conflicts of the ministry with the confidence of Paul: "I know whom I have believed, and am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him against that day."

Another fundamental point which you fully admit is, that there must be a *call* to the ministry. You believe that it belongs to the Saviour alone to give pastors and teachers to his church, and to commission ambassadors to his enemies. You do not believe that every pious man, nor even every pious and well-educated man, has a right to become a minister. You believe that he whom God designs for the ministry will have a special intimation of the will of God, without which he must not presume to enter the sacred office. I will proceed, then, in my next to examine the nature of a call to the ministry. May the Lord preserve us from error, and guide us into all truth.

Affectionately yours.

LETTER II.

My dear Brother—While you fully believe that there is a special call to the ministry, you do not admit the idea of a *miraculous* intimation of the will of God. You do not expect to be addressed by an audible voice. You look for no visions. You wait for no supernatural light from heaven to flash suddenly upon you. Of all these you find instances in the Scriptures: but you do not believe that God now communicates, by such methods, his commands to men. A knowledge of his will, therefore, in all cases where there is not an express revelation of that will in the Scriptures, must be gathered from the general principles there laid down,

from the providence of God, and from the movings of his Spirit on the soul.

Let us then inquire what light on this subject may be derived from the general principles of the Bible.

One of these principles is, that we *are not our own, but are bought with a price.* The Saviour has redeemed us by his precious blood, and we are his by every claim which can spring from his relation to us as our Creator and our Redeemer. All Christians are bound by every tie of love, of gratitude, of regard to their own happiness, and of desire for the glory of their Lord, "to live, not unto themselves, but unto him which died for them, and rose again." Christians are in the highest sense the "peculiar people"—that is, the property of the Saviour, whom he has an entire right to place where he pleases, to employ in whatever service he may choose, and to subject to whatever trials and labors may be best adapted to promote his own glory and the prosperity of his kingdom. No Christian, therefore, is at liberty to consult his own taste or inclination alone, nor to seek exclusively his own advantage. Every Christian ought to inquire with a humble, grateful spirit of self-consecration to the Saviour's cause, "Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?" There is, in a certain sense, a call to every service in which a Christian can be engaged, and he ought not to take any important step without seeking by prayer, by observing the providences of God, and by listening to the intimations of the Spirit, to know what is the divine will. A call to the ministry, I conceive, differs from a call to occupy any other post in the service of the Saviour, not so much in its nature as in its importance. The office of the ministry is more important, and therefore requires higher qualifications; but the minister's duty to *live for the Saviour* is no stronger, and indeed no other than the obligation which embraces every Christian.

From this principle then, my dear brother, we deduce this rule, that *an entire willingness to serve the Saviour in the ministry, or in any other post, is one necessary qualification of a minister.* This willingness, I am happy to believe, you sincerely cherish. Ever pray that it may continue to influence all your conduct. It will be a source of peace to whatever sphere of duty the Saviour may direct you. Affectionately yours.

LETTER III.

My dear Brother—Another general principle which the Scriptures teach is, that it is the duty of every Christian *to contribute all in his power to the promotion of truth and holiness.* Nothing less than the utmost exertion of all his faculties can fulfil his duty. It becomes, then, a question which every Christian ought seriously and prayerfully to examine, *How can I be most useful?* As God has given to men different degrees of ability, he has evidently designed them for different stations. The parable of the talents is founded on this principle, and it teaches us the consolatory truth, that the faithful servant will be approved and rewarded by his master, whether he possess ten talents or but one. The reasoning of the apostle Paul, in the 12th chapter of Romans, proceeds on the fact, that there are different offices to be filled, and that different qualifications are given to those who are designed to occupy them: "As we have many members in one body, and all members have not the same office, so we, being many, are one body in Christ, and every one members one of another. Having then gifts differing according to the grace that is given to us, whether prophecy, let us prophesy according to the

proportion of faith; or ministry, let us wait on our ministering; or he that teacheth, on teaching; or he that exhorteth, on exhortation; he that giveth, let him do it with simplicity; he that ruleth, with diligence; he that showeth mercy, with cheerfulness." We may, then, safely adopt this general rule, that wherever God has given to an individual the qualifications for a particular work, he ought to engage in that work. There would otherwise seem to be a waste of power. In the human body, each organ is evidently intended for its appropriate service. There is nothing deficient, and nothing superfluous. In the body of Christ the case is similar. God has undoubtedly distributed among her members all needful gifts for her preservation and growth. It is to be lamented that these gifts are not always judiciously and faithfully employed.

The principle now under consideration supplies us with two important rules, which may assist a young man to ascertain his duty respecting the ministry.

1. *That he ought himself to be convinced, on reasonable grounds, that he would be more useful as a minister than in any other sphere of duty.*

2. *That he ought to possess, in the opinion of others who are competent to judge, the essential qualifications for the ministry.*

The judicious Andrew Fuller has accordingly stated, in his brief remarks on a "Call to the Ministry," that it is a principle which may be taken for granted, that "whoever possesses the essential qualifications for the Christian ministry, is called to exercise them." I will, in my next letter, consider what light may be reflected on the path of duty from the *providence* of God.

Affectionately yours.

LETTER IV.

My dear Brother—I mean to use the phrase *providence of God*, as including whatever God has done for a man, in respect to his endowments of body and of mind, the situation in which he is placed, and his duties and relations to his fellow-men.

That the physical constitution has some bearing on the question of duty respecting the ministry, is evident. A dumb man could not be a minister, whatever might be his mental and spiritual qualifications. A man whose health was greatly impaired, or whose constitution was so feeble as to preclude the hope of efficiency, ought not to enter on the work. In all such cases, the providence of God has decided the question.

The constitution of the mind has a still more direct connection with the subject. A man must have such a degree of understanding as to enable him to learn and to teach, or he cannot be fit for a minister. This degree we cannot fix in theory, though there will be little difficulty, perhaps, in deciding the point in practice. A feeble mind, which cannot manage ordinary affairs with success; a dull mind, which cannot learn; an eccentric mind, which prompts a man to say and do imprudent things; an indolent mind, which will not study; a very irascible temper, and other bad qualities of this kind, ought to be regarded as evidence that God does not intend the individual for the ministry. The qualifications specified in 1 Tim. 3 : 1–7, and Titus 1 : 5–9, should be carefully considered.

I say nothing here of an ignorant mind, because such a mind may be instructed, if it possess the ability and disposition. And here, my brother, allow me to make a suggestion, which is, I conceive, very important. The question,

Am I called to be a minister? does not include the question, *Is it my duty* NOW *to preach?* Much of the error which exists on this subject among the churches, and much of the embarrassment which often distresses the minds of young Christians, spring from confounding these questions. The inquiry, in most cases, ought to be, *Is it my duty to* PREPARE *to preach the Gospel?* It may be a man's duty to be acquiring the qualifications for the ministry, who is not yet fit to preach. This is too plain, it would seem, to need proof. Yet it may be profitable to illustrate this point. Paul informs us that he was separated and designed for the ministry from his birth. Gal. 1 : 15. The same fact is asserted by Jehovah himself concerning Jeremiah. Jer. 1 : 5. And all who believe in the foreknowledge of God, must believe that this is true of all the ministers whom he appoints. Some eminent ministers, like Dr. Doddridge, became pious in childhood. If Dr. Doddridge, while a child, had been informed by Jehovah that he was designed for the ministry, would it have been his duty then to commence preaching? Certainly not. It would have been his duty to devote himself to an earnest *preparation* for the work. If, then, a case might happen, in which the individual would be called, not to preach, but to *prepare* to preach, why should we suppose it unreasonable to conclude that God often does, by his providence and his Spirit, call men to the ministry, to be exercised not now, but when they shall have acquired the necessary preparation? Our Saviour called his apostles, not to preach immediately, but to be disciples, that is, *learners,* and when they were instructed, he sent them forth to proclaim his Gospel.

If this reasoning is correct, the difficulty which seriously embarrasses many young men, the want of sufficient education, is removed. It is a plain case, that God does not call a man to preach immediately, who is incapable of teaching.

It would be an impeachment of his wisdom to suppose it. But he may call a man to *prepare* to preach. If a young man, then, has the other qualifications, his want of education is not a reason for doubting whether he is called to be a minister; that is, to be a minister when he shall have made all suitable preparation. And at this time, when Education Societies are ready to assist every suitable applicant, and when seminaries of learning are so numerous, almost every young man may, if he will, obtain a competent education.

This view of the case, too, shows how unfounded is the objection, which is often made by Christians, to a course of education for the ministry. If, say they, a man is called to preach, he ought to preach, and not to spend his time at college, or at the theological seminary. But they mistake the point. If the call is to *prepare* to preach, the young man would disobey God if he should preach instead of pursuing his studies. Let, then, Christians beware how they censure young men, and entice them from their books. They undoubtedly often resist the will of God by such an interference, and destroy the usefulness of the unhappy man whom they have persuaded to misinterpret his call, and enter the field before he was prepared. This course of reasoning, too, shows that it is an injurious and wrong practice, to give a young man a *license* to *preach* before he is prepared. The practice of the churches on this subject ought to be conformed to the indications of God's will. If the call is to *prepare* to preach, the church ought to give a young man, of whose other qualifications they are satisfied, an expression of their approbation of such a course of preparation, reserving the *license* for that period when he shall have acquired a sufficient amount of knowledge and experience to enable him to teach.

Affectionately yours.

LETTER V.

My dear Brother—We may reasonably suppose that if God designs a young man for the ministry, his providence will furnish some *intimation of his will* besides the proper endowments of body and mind. The individual may expect to see, in his situation, in his pursuits, in his connection with others, a variety of circumstances concurring to point out his duty. The hand of God will be presented to guide his steps. There will be, especially, a removal of obstacles. These may spring from the opposition of parents or employers, in the case of a minor; from various engagements which cannot be violated without sin, and a release from which cannot be obtained; from pecuniary obligations; from domestic ties; and from a great variety of other causes. A man may be sure that while any lawful engagement which he cannot honorably disregard, opposes his entrance into the ministry, he must not proceed. He may use all proper means to obtain a release, but if this is impossible, he must submit. The minister must have a spotless reputation, and the scandal of violated engagements would destroy his usefulness. He must wait patiently, and if the difficulty is never removed, he must forego the privilege of preaching the Gospel. But a removal of the obstacle, especially if it takes place in such a way as to make the interference of God manifest, may be an encouraging indication of his will in reference to the ministry.

There are circumstances, too, in which a young man is sometimes placed, which impel him towards the ministry without any volition, or indeed consciousness of the fact, on his part. In the Sabbath-school he may be required, by a sense of duty, to take a prominent place. In conference and prayer-meetings the absence or supineness of others

may force him to become the leader. In some cases, where a church is destitute of a pastor, a young man may be urged by his brethren to read, and pray, and address the assembly, till he finds himself considered by others as a minister, and his own heart is too much interested to allow him to retrace his steps. This was almost literally the case with Andrew Fuller. Such providential events are among the strongest external evidences of a call to the ministry.

But the general opinion of Christians, among whom a young man is placed, that he is designed for the ministry, may be considered as the most satisfactory proof which can be furnished by God's providence. Respecting many of the necessary qualifications a man is not himself a sufficient judge. Of his talents, his piety, his prudence, his zeal for the glory of God, his aptness to teach, and his power to interest and benefit others, his brethren are better able to judge than himself. If, then, Christians around him come gradually to think that he is designed for the ministry, while he himself makes no disclosure of his feelings on the subject; or if, when he mentions it, he finds their minds prepared to approve and to encourage him, he may consider this concurrent opinion of Christians as a strong indication of the will of God. He ought not, it is true, to decide without that internal conviction of duty, of which I shall soon speak; but the favorable judgment of Christians ought greatly to strengthen that conviction. On the other hand, it may be established as a general rule, that a person ought to suspect the ground of such a conviction, if judicious and pious men around do not perceive in him ministerial gifts, and cannot bid him God speed. There are, without doubt, cases, in which the ignorance or prejudices of Christians may induce them to refuse their countenance and aid to a young man, and he may be forced to act from his own sense of duty. He would need, however, unusual-

ly strong evidences of his call, to authorize him to proceed in opposition to the opinion of his brethren.

Affectionately yours.

LETTER VI.

My dear Brother—I now approach, with some solicitude, the most important and difficult part of this subject. The *internal call, by the operation of the Holy Spirit on the heart,* is, we fully believe, indispensable. But the mode of that operation cannot be described, for the same reason that we cannot define the mode in which the Spirit accomplishes the call of a sinner from darkness to light. In both cases, we can do no more than describe some of the effects.

I have spoken, in Letter II., of the entire willingness which a man must feel to serve the Saviour in the ministry, or in any other sphere of duty. This willingness is a fruit of the Spirit. There must be, besides this, a decided *desire* to be thus employed. Such a desire is referred to by Paul. "This is a true saying, if a man desire the office of a bishop, he desireth a good work." There is not necessarily any immodesty, any ambitious aspiration in the desire to be a minister; but it is taken for granted, as Mr. Fuller remarks, that "this desire shall spring from a pure motive, and not from the love of ease, affluence, or applause. It is necessary, in my judgment," he continues, "that there should be a *special desire* of this sort, a kind of fire kindled in the bosom, that it would be painful to extinguish."

This desire will not be that transient impulse of zeal which usually impels young Christians to be active in religious duties, and to think that it would be a privilege to preach the Gospel, because they could thus be more useful. This feeling generally subsides into a calm principle

of benevolent activity in the particular sphere in which God may have placed the individual. But if a man is designed for the ministry this desire will increase. The value of the soul, the ruin and danger of impenitent sinners, and the rapid approach of eternity, will press themselves with great solemnity on his mind. He will feel an irrepressible desire to warn sinners of their danger, and to beseech them, in Christ's stead, to be reconciled to God. He will thus warn and beseech them, when he has an opportunity, either in private or in the Sabbath-school, or in the prayer-meeting. He will desire to be wholly occupied in thus persuading men to be reconciled to God; and the ministry, though he feels it to be awfully responsible and arduous, will appear to him desirable, because it would enable him to extend more widely his endeavors to turn his fellow-men from darkness to light, and to prepare them for the judgment-day.

But besides this earnest and unceasing desire to be employed in the ministerial office, there will be a conviction of duty to be thus engaged. The individual will feel so strong an impulse of soul towards this point, so entire a concentration of his thoughts and affections, that he cannot with a quiet mind think of pursuing any other employment. The condition of impenitent sinners, the urgent need of pastors for the destitute churches at home, and of missionaries to preach the Gospel to those who sit in darkness, will occupy his thoughts, will be the theme of his conversation, and will sometimes so excite his feelings that he cannot rest. He looks around on the ordinary pursuits of men, and feels that they are all comparatively trifling. He cannot endure the thought of spending his life in such pursuits. He is willing to renounce all worldly prospects for the sake of his Saviour and of his fellow-men. Though he is willing to do what his Lord may direct, yet he cannot think with satisfaction

of any other course of life than that which shall allow him the privilege of preaching the Gospel. He is fully aware that the ministry is arduous and responsible; and that human wisdom and strength are not "sufficient for these things." But he is not dismayed. He is willing to encounter the toil, and the self-denial; and his trust is in the Saviour, that his grace will be sufficient for him.

And all these feelings will be the strongest at those hours when his mind is most spiritual; when he enjoys the most communion with God; when the Saviour is the most precious to his soul, and when eternity rises to his view with the most distinctness, solemnity, and grandeur. It is in his closet, alone before God, that he feels most deeply the duty of devoting his life to the sacred work; and it is then that he can, with the utmost simplicity and godly sincerity, offer himself to his Redeemer, to be his servant, saying, "Here, Lord, am I, send me. Employ me as thou mayest please. Send me whither thou shalt choose, even if it be to the ends of the earth. Appoint for me prosperity or suffering, as thou mayest judge to be best; but allow me the privilege of preaching thy Gospel to perishing men. Make me the instrument of saving them from sin and from wrath; and grant me thy presence, in life and in death, and I ask no more."

These, my brother, are some of the feelings which the Holy Spirit produces in the heart of that man whom he designs for the ministry. They may not be experienced in an equal degree by all who are called to preach the Gospel; but he who has never felt such emotions ought to doubt whether it is his duty to be a minister.

He, on the contrary, who does feel them, and who at the same time is conscious that from pure motives he desires to be engaged in the ministry, may be satisfied that the Holy Spirit is moving him to the work; and if the prov-

idence of God seems to point in the same direction; if obstacles are removed from his path; if circumstances concur to promote his wishes; if there is nothing adverse in his mental or physical constitution; and especially, if judicious and pious friends concur in the opinion that he possesses suitable gifts for the ministry, he ought not to hesitate. His call is clear. It has the distinct signature of the divine hand. Let him at once surrender himself to the Saviour's service, and prosecute with all diligence the necessary preparation for the great and arduous, but most glorious office of preaching Christ crucified as "the way, the truth, and the life." He will need great mental as well as spiritual resources, and he must employ all the means in his power to cultivate his mind and to grow in grace. If circumstances allow him to obtain a thorough education, he would be guilty if he neglected them. If he cannot prosecute an extensive course of study, let him do what he can, and his Master will aid, approve, and reward him.

Affectionately yours.

LETTER VII.

My dear Brother—I have endeavored, in the preceding letters, to lay before you all the considerations which seem to me necessary to enable you to decide the question of duty respecting the ministry. You alone can judge respecting the application to yourself of several of the rules which I have mentioned. Allow me to present them again to your mind in the form of questions; and may He who judges the heart enable you to examine faithfully your feelings and motives.

Are you satisfied that you have been born again; and can you, like Peter, say, "Lord, thou knowest all things,

thou knowest that I love thee?" Do you habitually regard yourself as not your own, but as under sacred obligations to live, not unto yourself, but unto Him who died for you and rose again? And do you feel an entire willingness to serve him, either in the ministry, or in the humblest station which he may please to appoint for you? Do you constantly feel it to be your duty to be as useful as possible; and do you seize every opportunity of usefulness which is presented to you by the providence of God? Are you active in the Sabbath-school, punctual at the conference and prayer-meeting, and always ready to admonish and plead with the impenitent? Does a strong love for the Saviour's cause, and for the souls of men, warm your heart; and do you desire to be a minister of the Gospel, that you may be entirely devoted to the work of spreading the knowledge of Christ and him crucified? Are you conscious that this desire springs from pure motives, from sincere love to the Saviour and compassion to perishing men, and not from ambition, nor from a wish for ease and emolument?

Are you solemnly impressed with a sense of duty to preach the Gospel? Do you find your thoughts and feelings strongly directed towards the ministry, as the sphere in which, as you believe, you may be the most useful and the most happy? Does every other employment seem to you uninviting and irksome, not from indolence, but because you feel that your life may be spent more profitably in pleading the Saviour's cause with men? Do you feel that it would render you unhappy, and make life a melancholy scene, if you should be denied the privilege of preaching the Gospel? And in your most devotional hours, when souls appear the most valuable, and the Gospel the most important and glorious, and your spirit draws the nearest to God, does the ministry then appear the most inviting, your duty the most plain, and your motives satisfactory to

your own mind? And, finally, does the providence of God seem to indicate his will? Are you free from every engagement which might prevent your entrance on the ministry, and do the difficulties in the way disappear?

If you can, my dear brother, in the fear of God, answer these questions in the affirmative, you may confidently believe that you are called to the ministry, so far as that call can be inferred from your own feelings and observation. There are other points, relating to your physical and mental constitution, your moral character, and your general habits, of which your brethren must judge. You ought to consult them, and if they are satisfied that you possess gifts which, with proper cultivation, will make you a useful minister, you have all the evidence which you can have, without a revelation from heaven, that it is your duty to preach the Gospel. I believe, my brother, you do possess the internal and the outward testimonials of God's will; and I earnestly exhort you to hesitate no longer, but to arise and commence your preparation for the great work. I rejoice to observe your conscientious anxiety to ascertain your duty before you proceed. It is, indeed, of immense importance to be satisfied on this point; for no minister can be happy, or very useful, who is in doubt respecting his call to preach the Gospel. I need say nothing of the minister who has either ignorantly or presumptuously entered the sacred office, and still finds himself without love to the Saviour. Such a minister, even admitting his deportment to be moral, is, nevertheless, a hinderance to the progress of religion; while he, as it has been strongly said, "pursues the hardest road to hell which a man can travel."

But, my brother, you may offend God by demanding proofs of his will which he may not be pleased to give. If you have the evidences which I have mentioned, you may and ought to proceed. That you may thus decide, and that

God may make you a blessing to his church, and an instrument of turning many to righteousness, is my earnest prayer. You will find the ministry laborious, and attended by many trials of patience and of faith. But it has many precious consolations and pleasures now, and there is reserved a glorious crown in heaven for all the faithful servants of our Lord. "They that be wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament, and they that turn many to righteousness, as the stars for ever and ever."

If my voice could reach all the young men in the churches, I would now say to them, "My dear brethren, in what way will you serve the Saviour? How can you do most for his glory, and for perishing men? Why is it not your duty to preach the Gospel? Examine yourselves; apply the preceding observations to your own hearts, and alone, before God, with the cross of Christ, the world lying in wickedness, and the judgment-day before you, inquire, 'Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?'"

And to the *pastors and churches* I would say, You have in this matter an important duty to perform. You ought to seek out the young men who furnish evidence of ministerial gifts. You ought to converse with them, and to encourage them. Often, it may be feared, do pastors and churches neglect their duty on this point. Young men are left to struggle with their feelings, without one word of advice or encouragement. The more modest they are, and therefore the more deserving of sympathy, the more reluctant they are to disclose their feelings, lest they should be attributed to pride and presumption. A sense of unfitness, the greatness of the work, doubts concerning duty, all throng upon the mind, and often produce inconceivable distress, which one word of kind sympathy and advice from a pastor or Christian friend might remove. Many young men, it cannot be doubted, who ought to preach the Gos-

pel, are overcome by these anxieties, doubts, and fears, and relinquish the thought of the ministry. It is a mistake to suppose, that if it is a man's duty to preach, he will force his way through every obstacle. A man may neglect to preach as he may fail to perform any other duty; and he is the more liable to neglect this duty, because the conscientious mind will probably consider it a less sin to refuse to preach, though it be a duty, than to preach when it is not. If his doubts preponderate in the smallest degree, the mind of a conscientious man will be very liable to abandon the design, and thus the very best ministers may be lost to the church.

But if a young man surmounts his doubts and discouragements, and makes his case known to his brethren, he is sometimes treated with cold suspicion, and obstacles are thrown in his way on purpose to test the strength of his zeal. And if, at last, the proper encouragement is given, so much time may have been wasted, that it is too late to enter upon the work with advantage.

There may be cases, too, in which a young man may not have thought of the ministry, who may, nevertheless, furnish evidence of piety, talents, and zeal, which would make him useful as a minister. It is undoubtedly the duty of pastors and Christians to converse with such a person, in a judicious manner; to inquire respecting his feelings; to ask him if it is not his duty to preach the Gospel; to urge him to reflect and pray on the subject; and thus give his mind a direction towards the object. No reason can be given why it is not as much our duty to use the proper means in this case, as it is to persuade a sinner to be reconciled to God. In both cases God may employ us as instruments to accomplish his will.

May God preserve us all from the guilt of neglecting our own duty, and of hindering others. May he send forth

many laborers into his harvest, and may his kingdom come, and his will be done on earth, as it is in heaven.

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you, my brother, and with all who love him in sincerity.

Your affectionate BROTHER.

NOTE.—A premium, offered by a friend, was awarded to the author of this Tract.

HERALDS OF THE GOSPEL.

How beauteous are their feet
  Who stand on Zion's hill!
Who bring salvation on their tongues,
  And words of peace reveal.

How charming is their voice!
  How sweet the tidings are!
"Zion, behold thy Saviour King;
  He reigns and triumphs here."

How happy are our ears,
  That hear this joyful sound,
Which kings and prophets waited for,
  And sought, but never found!

How blessed are our eyes,
  That see this heavenly light;
Prophets and kings desired it long,
  But died without the sight!

The watchmen join their voice,
  And tuneful notes employ;
Jerusalem breaks forth in songs,
  And deserts learn the joy.

Watts.

No. 286.

DYING TESTIMONY

OF

BELIEVERS AND UNBELIEVERS.

COLLECTED FROM AUTHENTIC SOURCES.

BY W. C. BROWNLEE, D. D.

Christianity has its *living witnesses*, whose testimony is "known and read of all men." In these are held forth the truth and divinity of the Christian religion, in its life, beauty, and fascinating charms of holiness. This evidence is vivid and affecting, the manifest result of a divine efficacy put forth in the formation of Christian character. It is seen and known to be of God, by all who have eyes to see and hearts to understand. It is evidence, at once striking and convincing. It exhibits an *effect* for which no human wisdom or power can ever be deemed an adequate cause. It

is ever present before the eyes of men; exhibiting the same heavenly traits from generation to generation. And when a uniformly consistent and holy *life* is closed by a *dying* testimony, the evidence is then complete.

We should not, therefore, separate the consistent life of godliness from the *dying* testimony of the saints. The two combined constitute an invaluable *living epistle* to the honor of Christ Jesus and his holy religion.

It is true, the Christian, after a consistent course of holiness, may depart this life without an opportunity of bearing his dying testimony. He may die suddenly, or in the delirium of a fever—safely as to his state, it is true, but without having the honor and the felicity of bearing a dying testimony for his Lord.

In other instances, dying Christians, having lived too much in the spirit of the world, have exhibited great mental distress under the hidings of God's countenance. The celebrated Hugo Grotius in the bitterness of his spirit cried out, "Oh, I have consumed my days in a laborious trifling. I would give all my learning and honor for the plain integrity of poor John Urich!" This was a poor neighbor of his, who usually spent *eight* hours a day in prayer. When Salmasius, one of the finest scholars of his age, came to die, he cried out, "Oh, I have lost a world of time: the most precious thing in the world. Oh, sirs, mind the world less, and God more!" The famous Swiss physician, Baron Haller, was in great darkness and distress of mind on his death-bed; he bewailed his misspent time, and solemnly warned those about him to devote their time to God. He was enabled at last, however, to express his renewed confidence in God's mercy, through Jesus Christ. The case of Dr. Samuel Johnson, the colossus of English literature, was very similar to this. It was not until the pure light of evangelical truth broke in upon his mind that he obtained true Christian peace.

The deaths of men of the world, and the enemies of Christ, we cannot contemplate without salutary instruction and solemn warning. I might refer to many recorded in the Bible, such as that of Pharaoh; of Korah; of the two sons of Aaron, who perished under the influence of wine, in the act of offering, like the infidel, "strange fire on God's altar;" of Achan, whose heinous crimes brought sudden death on thirty-six men, and a fearful retribution on himself; and Balaam, who sacrificed his allegiance to God, and his own honor, conscience, and life, to the lust of ambition; Absalom, the unnatural child and rebellious subject; King Ahab, and his queen Jezebel, who met the fearful doom of the persecutors of Christ and his people; Haman, the unprincipled statesman, who sought to sacrifice the people of God on the altar of his personal ambition, and who was hurried suddenly to the very gibbet which his hands had reared for his rival; JUDAS ISCARIOT, who betrayed our Lord, and whose doom was thus written by God—"*Good were it for that man had he never been born!*" Ananias and Sapphira, who "lied unto God the Holy Ghost," and perished in the act of their sin; and Elymas, the false prophet, who was smitten blind while he opposed the Gospel of Christ: but we shall select the following.

JULIAN THE APOSTATE sought to destroy the Christian religion, and its ministry, by depriving them of their schools and the means of education. He avowed it as his object to show the falsity of the Scripture predictions respecting the temple; and for this purpose he gave orders that it should be rebuilt, and the Jews' worship set up again. But, as historians relate, he was utterly defeated; balls of fire issuing out of the foundation, scattering the materials and overwhelming the workmen with terror. He fell in battle, fighting against the Persians. Finding himself mortally wounded, he received a handful of his gushing blood, and threw it up towards heaven, "in spite," says one historian, "against

the sun, the idol of the Persians, which fought against him;" but more probably, as other respectable historians state, "in malignant hatred against Christ;" who also add, that "as he hurled the blood upward, he cried, *Thou hast conquered, O Galilean!*"

Antiochus IV. was an unrelenting enemy of the church of God. In a furious passion he vowed the utter ruin of Jerusalem and the people of God. He took an oath that he would make it a national sepulchre for the Jews, and extirpate them to a man. But even while the words were in his mouth the wrath of God fell on him, and smote him with a horrible disease. In spite of all the arts of his physicians, his body became a mass of putrefaction, whence there issued an incredible number of worms; and the torture of his mind was infinitely superior to that of his body. And before he sunk into a delirium he acknowledged that it was the hand of the Almighty that had crushed him.

And by the same form of disease Philip II. of Spain perished; a persecutor of Christians, more bigoted and more bloody than either of the former. His flesh consumed away on his bones, by incurable ulcers, which sent forth innumerable swarms of worms, so that nobody could approach him without fainting. His shrieks and groans were heard over the palace.

Alexander Campbell was a Dominican friar, who stood by and assailed the Scottish martyr, Patrick Hamilton. After the martyr was in the flames, and the powder, having exploded, had severely scorched his hand and his face, this impious man cried out incessantly to him, "Repent, heretic. Call on our lady, and say, *Hail, Mary!*" The martyr meekly replied, "Depart from me, thou messenger of Satan, and trouble not my last moments." But, as he still uttered with great vehemence, "Pray to our lady; say, *Hail, Mary!*" the martyr turned his eyes on him and said, "O thou vilest

of men, thou knowest in thy conscience that these doctrines which thou condemnest are true, and this thou didst confess to me in secret. I cite thee to answer for this at the judgment-seat of Christ." Buchanan and Knox add, that the friar in a short time became distracted, and died in the ragings of despair. Scot's Worthies.

John Nisbet, a lawyer of Glasgow, was a mocker of piety, and a drunkard. In 1681, when the martyr, the Rev. Donald Cargill, was on the way to the scene of his sufferings for *Christ's cause and crown*, this man cruelly insulted him in public. As the martyr stood in chains, he said to him, "Mr. Donald"—Mr. Cargill, whom he thus addressed, was an aged man, his hair as white as snow; he had been long the eloquent minister of the High Church of Glasgow, loved and revered by all good men—"Mr. Donald, will you give us *one word more?*" alluding, in mockery, to a familiar phrase which this eminent man of God frequently used when summing up his discourses. The martyr turned his eyes in tears of sorrow and regret on him, and said to him, in that deep and solemn tone so peculiar to him, "Mock not, lest your bands be made strong." He added, after a solemn pause, "That day is coming when you shall not have one word to say, though you would!" The historian Wodrow adds, "Not many days after this, the Lord was pleased to lay his hands on that bad man. At Glasgow, where he lived, he fell suddenly ill, and for three days his tongue swelled, and though he seemed very earnest to speak, yet he could not command one word, and he died in great torment and seeming terror." This faithful historian, who published his great work in folio, "The History of the Sufferings of the Church," etc., in the year 1722, has added these words: "*Some yet alive know the truth of this passage.*" Vol. 3, p. 279, 8vo edit.

Hobbes, after spreading atheism among some of the first men of the nation, and corrupting the youth, said with

horror, in his last moments, "*I am taking a fearful leap in the dark.*"

Voltaire died amid the impious adulations of France, one of the most miserable of human beings in this world, smitten by the visible stroke of the Almighty, crying out in the horrors of despair on the name of Christ at one time, and at another, on the names of his associates and admirers, whom he execrated, and cursed as the cause of his ruin and abandonment of heaven. Wilson's Evid. of Chris.

"David Hume died as a philosopher dies," said Dr. Smith in his memoir. But he and Laurence Sterne are among the few instances of men who died as the fool dieth; or *affected to do so.* The former, "the philosophical historian," relieved the agitations of his mind by his favorite whist, and by puerile attempts at wit, in fabricating dialogues between himself and the fictitious Charon. The latter, "the clerical buffoon," as Simpson calls him, when he came to be in dying circumstances, perceiving death to make his advances upward, affected to be witty; raising himself up in his bed, he is said, either in real or pretended rage, to have sworn at the sly assassin death, that *he should not kill him yet!* But it is now well known in the literary and religious world, that Hume died in extreme agony and horror of mind. His nurse, a truly respectable woman, has detailed the dreadful secret, and expressed her fervent desire never to witness such another horrible death-bed scene.*

Thomas Paine was another who, as some yet alive in the city of New York know, yielded up his troubled spirit in a tempest of agony and despair; alternately uttering fearful execrations, and calling on the insulted name of Jesus Christ.

Francis Spira, a Venetian lawyer of the sixteenth century, who had deliberately violated his conscience, and

* See Professor Silliman's Journal in Europe, and several recent statements.

denied his God, seemed to be forsaken of his Maker, and given up to the horrors of despair; his body was wasted away to a skeleton, while an unquenchable fire consumed his soul.

Thomas Scot, a privy councillor of James V. of Scotland, was a noted persecutor of the reformers. Being taken suddenly ill, and finding himself dying, he cried out to the Roman priests who sought to comfort him, "Begone, you and your trumpery; until this moment I believed that there was neither a God nor a hell. Now I know and I feel that there are both, and I am doomed to perdition by the just judgment of the Almighty." Scot's Worthies, Appendix, p. 7.

Cardinal Mazarine cried out with tears in his last moments, "O my poor soul, what is to become of thee? Whither wilt thou go? O, were I permitted to live again, I would sooner be the humblest wretch in the ranks of mendicants than a courtier."

Charles IX., king of France, was young in years, but old in crime. He plotted the horrid massacre of the Protestants in his kingdom. Within a few days 30,000; others say 50,000; another writer, 100,000 Protestants were butchered in cold blood. "Being stricken in early life by an incurable disease, these scenes, so shocking to humanity, presented themselves in fearful array to his guilty mind," and, as an accurate recorder of events says, "produced on his death-bed the appalling exhibition of a tortured conscience and an avenging heaven."

The case of Lord P——— is detailed by Mr. Simpson in his "*Plea.*" He was an apostate, a deist, and a mocker of religion. On his dying bed his conscience was overwhelmed with horror at what he had done. In this agony of mind he called to a person to "go and bring *that cursed book*," meaning the work by which he had been seduced into deism; "I cannot die until I destroy it." It was put

into his hands. With mingled horror and revenge he tore it into pieces, and hurled it into the flames, and soon after died in great horrors. Evang. Mag., June, 1797.

William Pope of Bolton was an apostate from religion. He united with a society of deists, who spent the Sabbath-day in confirming each other in deism, and in every outrage against the Holy Bible and the Christian religion. But the judgments of God soon fell on him. In his fatal illness he exclaimed, "Oh, I long to die, that I may be in the place of perdition—that I may know the worst of it." Being in a fearful agony, in his last moments he exclaimed with a doleful moan, "My damnation is sealed." This he repeated until he expired. See Meth. Mag., August, 1798, and Simpson's Plea.

The Duke of Rothes was the president of the supreme national council of Scotland under Charles II., and one of the chief instruments who conducted the revolting persecutions of that day. In early life he had made a profession of religion. But he forgot the example, and disappointed the pious hopes of his religious father. He became an apostate, and was one of *seven* public men who were solemnly excommunicated by the Rev. Mr. Donald Cargill. On the morning of the day in which this minister, Mr. Cargill, was led to the scaffold—and it is a memorable fact that he was condemned in the court of the lords of the justiciary by the casting-vote of Lord Rothes—Rothes was taken suddenly ill with a fatal distemper. The near prospect of eternity awakened the horrors of his sleeping conscience, the very bed shook under him, and his piercing cries of agony were heard over the neighborhood. By his request, the ministers of the Presbyterian church, whom he had persecuted, were assembled at his bedside to pray for him. While the Duke of Hamilton and the other nobles and officers of state were standing near him, he cried out, "We all thought little of that man," Mr. Cargill, "his

preaching, and his sentence. But O, sirs, I find it binding on my conscience now; and it will bind me to all eternity." Shortly after this he expired.

William Emmerson was, in his day, an eminent mathematician and scholar; but being an infidel, the fruits of it were profaneness, vice, and drunkenness. In his last days he exhibited a painful spectacle. In his paroxysms of the stone, he would crawl on his hands and knees, uttering at times broken sentences of prayer, intermingled with blasphemies and profane swearing. What a contrast between his death and that of Sir Isaac Newton, who died of the same painful disease. In the severest paroxysms, which even forced large drops of sweat that ran down his face, Sir Isaac never uttered a complaint, or showed the least impatience.*

"These examples," as one observes, "give little encouragement indeed to any person who has a proper concern for his own welfare, to embark in *the atheistic* or *the deistic* schemes. In those cases where conscience is awake, the miserable man is filled with anguish, and overwhelmed with amazement and inexpressible horror; and in those where conscience seems asleep, there appears nothing enviable in his situation, even upon his own supposition that there is no after-reckoning. If to die like an ass be a privilege, I give him joy of it. Let him reap the benefit of it. But *let me die the death of the righteous, and let my last end be like his.*"

We now turn to contemplate the death-bed scenes of some of the noble army of martyrs, confessors, and private Christians—"My fathers, my fathers, the chariots of Israel,

* It affords pleasure to find that Dr. Hales, in his work on "*Faith in the Holy Trinity*," has vindicated Sir Isaac Newton from the calumnious charge of being a Socinian, or Arian. See vol. 2, pp. 189, 190, note.

and the horsemen thereof!"—and while we look upon them as they go up, may the Spirit that rested on them descend and rest upon us.

1. We shall place at the head of them all, THE PRINCE OF MARTYRS, THE LORD JESUS CHRIST; for while we do, by faith, look to him as our great High-priest, who, by his sufferings on the cross, made a perfect atonement and satisfaction to divine justice for us, we must not fail to look to him as a MARTYR to the truth, a perfect example for imitation in all ages. In his agonies in the garden, when wrestling with the powers of darkness and anticipating the more awful agonies of the cross, he cried out, "O, my Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me. Nevertheless, not my will, but thine be done." He was not afraid, not unwilling to die for us; but O, let us remember what his soul and body were then enduring under the guilt of sinners. His holy soul did shudder at the prospect; and it did set us moreover an example of willingness to be spared as to our lives, and also of willingness to suffer and die whenever God's will should require it. O what dignity, what submission, what self-possession, what meekness did THE PRINCE OF MARTYRS uniformly display! "He was led as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so he opened not his mouth." "The cup which my Father giveth me, shall I not drink it?" Looking in the infinitude of his benevolence upon his bloody persecutors, he set before us the great and divine model of the forgiveness of enemies: "FATHER, FORGIVE THEM; FOR THEY KNOW NOT WHAT THEY DO." And then, knowing all things to be accomplished, he meekly bowed his head, as he cried with a loud voice, "IT IS FINISHED," and gave up his spirit. *If Socrates died as a hero,* JESUS CHRIST VERILY DIED AS A GOD.

Let us now turn to the noble band of martyrs and confessors, who have been imitators of God, as dear children.

2. The martyr STEPHEN was stoned to death while calling upon God, and saying, "Lord Jesus, receive my spirit." And he kneeled down and cried with a loud voice, "Lord, lay not this sin to their charge;" and when he had said this, he fell asleep.

3. The apostle PAUL, in prospect of his martyrdom, thus expressed himself: "I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand. I have fought a good fight; I have finished my course; I have kept the faith: henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the righteous Judge shall give me at that day."

4. IGNATIUS, who succeeded the apostle Peter in the church of Antioch, after faithfully preaching the Gospel, and winning many souls to Christ, sealed the truth with his blood. By the edict of the emperor Trajan, he was carried from Antioch to the city of Rome. Through all places whither he was conducted, he ceased not to exhort and animate all Christians; he was continually breathing out ardent desires for the crown of martyrdom, repeating, "My Love was crucified for me." In the amphitheatre of Rome, he was thrown to the hungry lions, and devoured by them as he commended his departing soul to Christ.

5. POLYCARP, bishop of Smyrna, was a devoted minister of the Lord. He suffered martyrdom in the ninety-fifth year of his age. When he was brought to the bar, the proconsul said, "Repent; reproach your CHRIST, and I will release you." "These fourscore-and-six years," cried Polycarp, "I have been *his* faithful follower and minister; never did *he* use me unkindly; how, then, can I blaspheme my King and Saviour?" "Repent; swear by the genius of the emperor, and offer incense," cried the Roman. "No, no," said the martyr; "I AM A CHRISTIAN, AND CANNOT DO IT." "Abjure Christianity, or you shall be thrown to the wild beasts." "Let them come on," cried Polycarp; "we

Christians are not accustomed to change from *better* to *worse*, but from *bad* to *better*." "You shall be burned alive," said the proconsul. Polycarp fixed his eyes on him and replied, "Your fire will be spent in an hour, but that which is reserved for sinners is ETERNAL." These were his last words: "O God of angels, and powers, and all creatures, and of all the just that live in thy sight, blessed be thou that hast made me worthy to see this day and hour—that hast made me a partaker among thy holy martyrs. O grant that this day I may be presented before thee among thy saints, a rich and acceptable sacrifice, according to thy will. O Lord, I adore thee for all thy mercies; I bless thee, I glorify thee, through thy only-begotten Son, the eternal High-Priest, Christ Jesus; through whom, in the unity of the Holy Ghost, to thee be glory now and for evermore;" and as he cried aloud "*Amen*," the fire was kindled, and he died in peace, with constancy and courage.

6. The famous AUGUSTINE, after a life of devotion to the service of God, longed to depart and be with Christ. "O Lord, shall I die at all—shall I die at all?" "Yes." "Why, then, O Lord, if ever, why not now; O why not now? But thy will be done. Come, Lord Jesus." Brooks' Apples of Gold.

7. There is an affecting resemblance between the last words of good old Simeon in the temple, who took the infant Saviour in his arms, and those of that holy man HILARY, the bishop of Poictiers, A. D. 355, the fellow-laborer of Athanasius in defence of the truth. Simeon exclaimed, "Now, Lord, lettest thou thy servant depart in peace, according to thy word; for mine eyes have seen thy salvation." The venerable Hilary, in his last moments, thus addressed his soul: "Soul, thou hast served Christ these seventy years, and art thou afraid to die? Go out, soul, go out." Brooks.

8. JOHN HUSS, the Bohemian martyr, was burned alive

in A. D. 1415. When he came to the place of execution, he threw himself on his knees and sung a psalm, and looking steadfastly up to heaven, he uttered this prayer: "Into thy hands, O Lord, I commit my spirit. Thou hast redeemed me, O most good and faithful God. Lord Jesus Christ, assist me, that with a firm and present mind, by thy most powerful grace, I may undergo this most cruel death, to which I am condemned for preaching thy most holy Gospel. Amen." When the chain was placed on his neck, he exclaimed with a smile, "Welcome this chain, for Christ's sake." As the faggots were piled up to his neck, the duke of Bavaria in a brutal manner called on him to abjure and submit. "No, no," cried the martyr; "I take God to witness I preached none but his own pure doctrines; and what I taught I am ready to seal with my blood." The fire being kindled, Huss sung a hymn with a loud voice, which was heard above all the crackling and roaring of the flames. Having finished the hymn, he cried with a loud voice, "Lord Jesus, thou Son of the living God, have mercy on me;" and as he uttered this, he sunk down in the flames and expired.

9. Jerome of Prague, the associate of Huss in the work of reformation, followed him to the stake a few months after this. Arrived at the place, he knelt down and commended himself to God in nearly the same words as Huss did. The whole deportment of this faithful minister of Christ exhibited unshaken courage, and at the same time holy submission to God's will. When the executioner was about to kindle the fire *behind* him, he said, "Bring thy torch hither; do thine office *before* my face; had I feared death, I might have avoided it." As the faggots began to blaze, he commenced singing a psalm in a loud voice, until at length he was suffocated in the flames.

10. The character of Luther, the great reformer, is well known. The two chief elements of his character were fer-

vent devotion* and invincible courage. When any fresh trouble arose, he would say, "Come, let us sing the forty-sixth psalm." When making his last will, he "bequeathed his detestation of popery to his friends and the brethren;" and repeated a saying of his own, "I was the plague of popery in my life, and shall continue to be so in my death." A little before he expired, he said often to his friends, "Pray, pray much for the propagation of the Gospel; the council of Trent"—which had sat once or twice—"and the pope would devise strange things against it." The last words he was heard to utter were these: "Into thy hands I commend my spirit. Thou hast redeemed me, O Lord Gód of truth." Thus the great reformer died a happy and triumphant death.

11. Melancthon, his illustrious associate, closed his glorious career also by a happy death. Raising himself up in his death-bed, he exclaimed with holy joy, "If God be for us, who can be against us?" Being asked by his affectionate relatives if he wanted any thing, he replied, "Nothing but heaven." And laying himself back, he gently fell asleep in Christ.

12. Beza, the colleague and successor of Calvin, when on his dying bed, went over the various promises contained in the ninety-first psalm, and then rehearsing the leading events and escapes he had met with, showed how wonderfully God had fulfilled all these promises to him. "Thou hast often delivered me from the snare of the fowler, and from the noisome pestilence which walked in secret; thou hast been my refuge and fortress when, on the field of battle, with my Protestant brethren, thousands were falling on every side. The Lord has given his angels charge over me; and now, having 'satisfied me with a long life,' I have no more to wait for but the fulfilling of the last words of the

* He never spent less than *three* hours a day in secret prayer. *Jones' Hist.*

psalm, '*I will show him my salvation*,' for which in confidence I have longed." Fleming's Fulf. of the Script.

13. PATRICK HAMILTON, the Scottish martyr, was related to the first nobles of Scotland, and also to King James V. He was converted under the ministry of Luther, while finishing his education in Germany, and about to receive the highest honors of the Romish church in his native land. He returned home in the twenty-third year of his age, and began to proclaim the pure Gospel to his countrymen. He was hurried through a mock trial by the court, and condemned, February 28, 1527, to be burned alive; and the same day was carried to the stake. While throwing off his upper garments he observed, "Albeit this death be bitter and painful in man's judgment, yet it is the entrance to eternal life." While friar Campbell disturbed his devotions, and said, "Recant, heretic, and call on the Virgin," the martyr meekly replied, "O, wicked man, thou knowest that I am no heretic: I cite thee to appear at the judgment-seat of Christ." As the fire blazed around him, he cried out, "How long, O Lord, shall darkness overwhelm this realm? How long wilt thou suffer this tyranny of men?" And just before he sunk down in the fierce flames, looking up to heaven, he uttered these, his last words: "O Lord Jesus, receive my spirit."

14. GEORGE WISHART, a man of apostolic character, who trained the useful spirit of John Knox, and paved the way for him in the Scottish reformation, fell a victim to the truth nineteen years after Patrick Hamilton. At the stake he cried out, "For the true Gospel, given me by the grace of God, I suffer this day with a glad heart. Behold, and consider my visage; ye shall not see me change color; I fear not this fire. I know surely, and my faith is such, that *my soul shall drink wine new with my Saviour this night!*" And kneeling down, he prayed for forgiveness to his accusers and enemies. As the fire was kindled, he raised his

eyes to heaven and cried, "*O Saviour of the world, have mercy on me! Father of heaven, into thy hands I commend my spirit.*"

15. John Knox the Scottish reformer's dying words were, "Come, Lord Jesus, sweet Jesus, into thy hands I commend my spirit: be merciful, O Lord, to thy church, which thou hast redeemed; raise up faithful pastors." After this, calling his friends to his bedside, he broke out in these rapturous expressions: "I have been meditating on the troubled state of the church, the spouse of Christ; I have called on God, and committed her to her head, Christ; I have fought against spiritual wickedness in high places, and have prevailed; I have tasted of the heavenly joys where presently I shall be." "Now, for the last time, I commit soul, body, and spirit into his hands." Uttering a deep sigh, he said, "*Now it is come!*" His faithful attendant desired him to give his friends a sign that he died in peace. On this he waved his hand, and uttering two deep sighs, he fell asleep in Jesus. See Dr. M'Crie.

16. When Tindal, the translator of the Bible, suffered martyrdom, in 1536, the last prayer he uttered was, "O Lord, open the king of England's eyes!" He lost sight of his own afflictions in his anxiety for the welfare of the church of Christ.

17. When the martyr Bilney suffered at the stake, in the reign of Henry VIII., he lifted up his arms towards heaven as the fire was applied to the faggots, and died exclaiming, "I believe, I believe."

18. Lambert, a martyr under Henry VIII., while he was cruelly mangled by the soldiers' halberts, and consumed in a slow fire, raised his hands, now flaming with fire, and exclaimed with a distinct voice, "*None but Christ; none but Christ.*"

19. Lawrence Saunders suffered martyrdom under the "bloody Queen Mary." He kissed the stake at which

he was bound, and cried aloud, "Welcome the cross of Christ; welcome the cross of Christ! Welcome life everlasting!"

20. Bradford, the most famous preacher of King Edward's day, was brought to the stake by Queen Mary. His last words, as he submitted to the flames, were, "Strait is the gate and narrow is the way that leadeth unto life; and few there be that find it. And now, O Lord Jesus, receive my spirit."

21, 22. In a few months after him, the immortal Latimer and Ridley were burned at Oxford. Latimer died in a short time in the fierce fire, but the wind kept the flames off the vitals of Ridley: his sufferings were excruciating; his lower parts being consumed before the fire reached his body! Their courage and holy resignation showed manifestly the presence of the blessed Comforter sustaining them. "*Be of good heart, brother,*" cried Ridley; "*for our God will either assuage the fury of this flame, or enable us to abide it.*" Latimer replied, "*Be of good comfort, brother; for we shall this day light such a candle in England as, by God's grace, shall never be put out!*"

23. The famous Cranmer, when brought to the stake, after making a bold confession of his faith, and deploring the error into which he had fallen in the hour of temptation, thrust his right hand into the flames, that being the hand with which he had signed his denial of his Lord, exclaiming, "*This hand has offended—this unworthy hand;*" and he moved it not, except once to wipe off the sweat of agony from his face, until it dropped off! He then cried aloud, "O Lord Jesus, receive my spirit." What a triumphant death before the very eyes of Christ's enemies!

24. Curæus, a learned German physician, when dying, said, "I am oppressed, O Lord; but it is enough that thy hand has done it. O dissolve me, that I may be with thee. Now, when my breath and spirits fail, let, O blessed Saviour,

thy Spirit speak, and intercede in my soul for me, with unutterable groans." "I shall see my Saviour in the flesh, at the Father's right hand. I shall follow him whither he goeth. O come, let us go forth to meet our Redeemer: behold, he cometh. Lord Jesus, receive me."

25. Bergerus, an illustrious councillor of the emperor Maximilian, and one much admired by Melancthon, said on his dying bed, "Farewell, O farewell, all earthly things, and welcome heaven! Let none hereafter make any mention of earthly things to me."

26. Zuniger, a learned professor of medicine at Basle, approached his end with holy longings and pantings after death: "I rejoice, yea, my spirit leaps within me for joy that now the time at last is come, when I shall see the glorious God face to face; whose glory I have had some glances of here, in the search of natural things; whom I have worshipped, whom I have by faith longed after, and after whom my soul has panted."

27. Olympia Fulvia Morata was a young lady brought up at the court of Ferrara, Italy, of distinguished talents and great acquirements; she could write and speak Greek and Latin. Having married a German physician, she removed into Germany, and was by his instructions brought to embrace the Protestant religion. In her last illness, her husband, deeply affected, was offering her consolations out of the Holy Bible, and discoursing of heaven. She replied with a sweet smile, "I long to be dissolved, and to be with Christ. I am all joy—full of joy. And now, dear husband, I know you no more. I feel an inexpressible tranquillity and peace with God, through Jesus Christ."

28. John Bunyan, the immortal author of the Pilgrim's Progress, closed his course of usefulness and honor by a truly Christian death. Having frequently exhorted all about his dying bed to faith and a godly life, he called on them repeatedly to spend much of their time in prayer.

His last words were, "Weep not for me, but for yourselves. I go to the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who no doubt will receive me, though a sinner, through the mediation of our Lord Jesus Christ; where I hope we shall ere long meet, to sing the new song, and remain happy for ever, world without end. Amen." Inverney's Memorial of Bunyan.

29. Addison, just before his departure, sent for a young nobleman for whom he had felt a deep interest, and taking him by the hand, said, "Behold in what peace a Christian can die."

30. Lord William Russel, son of the duke of Bedford, and a distinguished patriot, fell a victim to the tyranny of Charles II. in 1683. When his last interview was over with the countess his wife, on the evening before he was executed, he observed, "The bitterness of death is already past." Just before he was beheaded, he said aloud, "Neither imprisonment nor fear of death have been able to discompose me in any degree. On the contrary, I have found the assurances of the love and mercy of God, in and through my blessed Redeemer, in whom alone I trust. And I do not question but I am going to partake of that fulness of joy which is in his presence; the hopes of which do so wonderfully delight me, that I think this is the happiest time of my life, though others may look upon it as the saddest."

31. George Buchanan, the ornament of Scottish literature, and the tutor of King James VI., was an eminent Christian. Having gone into the country to see his friends, he was there taken with his last illness. King James, needing his assistance, sent a pressing message to him to be at court in twenty days. He sent this reply: "Before the days mentioned by your majesty shall be expired, I shall be in that place where few kings enter." At the hearing of this message the king wept bitterly.

32. Lord Bacon was one of the greatest geniuses of England, and what is more than all, a sincere Christian. How delicious to turn away from the vaporing pomp and parade of philosophists and infidels to the pages of such men as Bacon, and hear him saying, "A little philosophy inclineth men's minds to atheism; but depths in philosophy bring men's minds about to religion." I find a prayer of his which begins with these words, and which we record as his last testimony: "Thy creatures, O Lord, have been my books, but thy holy Scriptures much more. I have sought thee in the courts, fields, and gardens; but I have found thee, O God, in thy sanctuary, thy temples."

33. John Welch, the son-in-law of John Knox, was one of the most gifted ministers of the church of Scotland; a man of apostolic zeal and extraordinary devotion: he lived in holy communion with God. He died an exile in France for the word of God and the testimony of Jesus. Having preached to a congregation of Protestants in France, he was taken ill immediately as he left the pulpit. On his death-bed he seemed to feel himself on the very threshold of glory; he was filled and overpowered with the sensible manifestations of God's love and glory. The last words of this holy man were uttered in an ecstasy of joy: "It is enough, O Lord, it is now enough; hold thy hand; thy servant is a clay vessel, and can hold no more!" See Scot's Worthies.

34. Robert Bruce, another burning and shining light of that church, had been educated for the law by his father, one of the first barons of Scotland, and had got a patent to be one of the lords of session. But he was called by the grace of God to the ministry, and abandoning all his fascinating prospects, he joyfully took up the cross and followed Jesus. He was ordained to the ministry in Edinburgh, where he withstood King James' attempts to overturn the religion and liberties of Scotland, until he was exiled. He

died in his seventy-second year. He had taken his seat as usual at breakfast, and having eaten an egg as he used to do, and feeling still a good appetite, he called for another; but suddenly reclining his head in a musing posture, he said, "*Hold, daughter, my Master calls me!*" He lost his sight in a few moments; but calling for the Bible, he told them to open it at the eighth chapter of the Romans, at these words: "For I am persuaded that neither death nor life shall be able to separate me from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord." "Now," said the venerable man, "put my finger on these words;" and being told that it was, he said, "Now, God be with you, my dear children; I have breakfasted with you, and I shall sup with my Lord Jesus Christ this night." And saying this, he gently fell asleep. Scot's Worthies, p. 117.

35. James Durham was chaplain to King Charles I., and minister of the high church of Glasgow. On his dying bed he was at first in much darkness of mind. He said to a friend, "For all that I have preached and written, there is but one Scripture I can think of, or dare to lay hold of; tell me, brother, if I may dare lay the weight of my salvation on it: '*Whosoever cometh to me, I will in nowise cast out.*'" "That you may depend on," said the minister in reply, "though you had a thousand salvations at hazard." Having remained some time in silence, in great bodily pain, but wrestling in faith and prayer, he at length came joyfully from beneath the dark cloud, and cried in a rapture of joy, "Is not the Lord good? Is he not infinitely good? See, how he smiles! I do say it, and I do proclaim it." Scot's Worthies, p. 179, etc.

36. Samuel Rutherford, one of the most resplendent lights that ever rose in Scotland, was the professor of divinity in the university of St. Andrew's. When the parliament of Scotland summoned him for trial because he stood up for liberty and religion, he was on his dying bed. "Tell

the parliament," said he to the messenger, "that I have received a summons to a *higher bar;* I must needs answer *that* first; and when the day you name shall come, I shall be where few of you shall enter." In his last moments he said to ministers around him, "There is none like Christ. O, dear brethren, pray for Christ, preach for Christ, do all for Christ; feed the flock of God. And O, beware of men-pleasing." Having recovered from a fainting fit, he said, "I feel, I feel, I believe, I joy, I rejoice, I feed on manna; my eyes shall see my Redeemer, and I shall be ever with him. And what would you more? I have been a sinful man; but I stand at the best pass that ever a man did. Christ is mine, and I am his. Glory, glory to my Creator and Redeemer for ever. Glory shines in Immanuel's land. O for arms to embrace him! O for a well-tuned harp!" He continued exulting in God his Saviour to the last, as one in the full vision of joy and glory.

37. The noble Marquis of Argyle, whom the Scottish church piously numbers among her martyrs, sacrificed all for Christ's cause. On the morning of his execution, while busied in settling his worldly business, he was so overpowered by a sensible effusion of the Holy Spirit, that he broke out in a holy rapture, and said, "I thought to have concealed the Lord's goodness, but it will not do. I am now ordering my affairs, and God is sealing my charter to my heavenly inheritance, and is just now saying unto me, Son, be of good cheer, thy sins are forgiven thee." When advancing to the scaffold where he was beheaded, he exclaimed, "I could die as a Roman, but I choose rather to die as a Christian." See Scot's Worthies, and Wodrow.

38. Mr. James Guthrie was a learned and godly minister, the companion of the noble Argyle. He was the leading minister of the Presbyterian church in that afflictive period, and was singled out as the next victim by Charles II. He met his sufferings with Christian courage and

cheerfulness. He dined with his friends on the day of his execution; after dinner he called for a little cheese, which his physician had hitherto dissuaded him from using, as being not good for the gravel: "Now, my friends, I may use it," said he with a smile, "for I am beyond the reach of the gravel." His sufferings were occasioned purely by his religion and his opposing the tyranny of the Stuart dynasty. On the scaffold, after having fully enumerated the causes of his suffering, he said, "I take God to record on my soul, that I would not exchange this scaffold for the palace and the mitre of the greatest prelate in Britain. Blessed be God, who has showed mercy to me, and made me a minister of the everlasting Gospel. Jesus is my light and life, my righteousness, my strength and salvation, and all my desire. Him, O him do I commend with all my soul unto you. Bless him, O my soul, now and for ever. Now, O Lord, lettest thou thy servant depart in peace, for mine eyes have seen thy salvation."

39. Hugh McKail, who was among the first victims in the twenty-eight years' persecution in Scotland, was executed in the twenty-sixth year of his age. His great influence and popular talents as a preacher made him an object of jealousy. He closed his powerful and eloquent speech on the scaffold, in these sublime and touching words: "Now I leave off to speak any more to creatures, and begin my intercourse with God for ever. Farewell, father and mother, friends and relations; farewell the world and all its delights; farewell food and drink; farewell sun, moon, and stars. Welcome, God and Father; welcome, sweet Jesus, the Mediator of the New Testament; welcome, blessed Spirit of all grace, and God of consolations; welcome glory, welcome eternal life, welcome death!" And having prayed a few moments, he lifted his eyes to heaven and cried with a loud voice, "O Lord, into thy hands I commend my spirit; for thou hast redeemed my soul, O Lord God of truth."

And while uttering this prayer he was launched into eternity.

40. James Renwick was the last that was martyred in that persecution for "liberty, religion, and the covenants." Like McKail, he was young, being only twenty-six years of age when he suffered, and of distinguished talents and oratory. On the scaffold he was repeatedly interrupted in a brutal manner, by the tumultuous beating of the drums stationed below the scaffold, in order to prevent the immense multitude from hearing his speech, a custom peculiar to those days. He smiled and said, "They will not let a dying man be heard." His last words were, "O Lord, I die in the faith that thou wilt not leave thy church, but that thou wilt make the blood of thy witnesses the seed of thy church, and return again, and be glorious in our land. And now, O Lord, I am ready." Then whispering to his friend on whom he leaned, he said, "Farewell, be diligent in duty; carry my love to my dear brethren in the furnace." Then turning to the multitude, and lifting his eyes to heaven, he cried, "Lord, into thy hands, I commend my spirit; for thou hast redeemed me, Lord God of truth. Amen."

41. Capt. John Paton. These heroic Christian examples were not confined to the ministers in that period. Captain Paton, who served in the wars under Gustavus Adolphus, and afterwards in the army of Scotland, was a brave and judicious soldier. He died for his *religion*, and in the defence of Scottish *liberty*. His last words on the scaffold were, "I leave my testimony against the impious usurpation of Christ's prerogative and crown. I solemnly adhere to the whole work of reformation; I forgive all my persecutors and enemies, and pray God to forgive them. I leave my dear wife and my six sweet children on the Lord, the Father of the orphans and the widow's husband. And now, farewell all worldly joys, farewell sweet Scriptures, and preaching, and reading, and praying, and sing-

ing. Welcome, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. I desire to commit my soul to thee in well-doing. O Lord, receive my spirit." Thus fell one of the most gallant officers of the Scottish army. Scot's Worthies, p. 396.

42. CLAUDE, whose fame is in all the churches, was exiled from France by the ferocious bigotry of Louis XIV. His closing scene was truly affecting and instructive. Having pronounced his solemn benediction on his spouse and his son—an able minister of Christ—and on an aged domestic, all kneeling at his bedside; and having committed them to the God of the widow and fatherless, he uttered these his last words: "I am so oppressed that I can attend only to *two* of the great truths of religion, namely, the mercy of God, and the gracious aids of the Holy Ghost. I know in whom I have believed, and am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed to him against that day. Our Lord Jesus Christ is my only righteousness."

43. The pious HERVEY thus closed his life, pouring out his soul in prayer: "How thankful am I for death! It is the passage to the Lord and Giver of eternal life. O welcome, welcome death! Thou mayest well be reckoned among the treasures of the Christian; to live is Christ, to die is gain. Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace, for mine eyes have seen thy salvation."

44. Dr. LEECHMAN, the venerable principal of the university of Glasgow, when dying, thus addressed a young nobleman: "You see my tranquillity and composure: it is joy, it is triumph; it is complete exultation. And whence does it spring? From the blessed Gospel contained in the Holy Bible. It is that, it is that which makes us certain that this mortal shall put on immortality."

45. The venerable RALPH ERSKINE, a faithful and devoted minister of the church of Scotland, was for a few hours preceding his dissolution in great darkness and mental distress. But, shortly before he died, he raised his

hands, and clapping them, he exclaimed, "Victory, victory!" and soon after expired.

46. The pious Bishop Bedell, who has been styled "the scourge of corruption, and the great luminary of the Irish church," died as a man of God dies. Having blessed his family, and addressed godly admonitions and instructions to his sons, he said, "I have waited for thy salvation, O Lord." "I have fought the good fight, I have finished my course." "Grievous wolves have crept in upon us; but the good Shepherd will take care of his sheep, and they shall dwell safely. I have kept the faith; for which cause I have suffered; but I am not ashamed: I know whom I have believed; he will keep that which I have committed to him against that day." Soon after he fell asleep in Christ.

47. The immortal John Locke applied himself closely to the study of the Holy Scriptures for the last fourteen years of his life. To a young gentleman he said, "If you would attain the true knowledge of the Christian religion, study the Bible, especially the New Testament. The Bible has God for its author, salvation for its end, and truth, without any mixture of error, for its matter." On his death-bed he exhorted all about him to study the word of God. "Blessed be God," said he, "for what the law has shown to man; blessed be his name for justifying him through faith in Christ; and thanks be to thy name, O God, for having called me to the knowledge of the divine Saviour."

48. Baxter closed his course full of the joys of the Holy Ghost. To some ministers who were comforting him, he said, "I have pains; there is no arguing against sense; but I have *peace*, I *have* peace." "You are now drawing near your long-desired home," said one. "I believe, I believe," was his reply. When the question was put to him, "How are you?" he promptly answered, "*Almost*

well." To a friend who entered the chamber, he said, "I thank you, I thank you for coming." Then fixing his eye on him, he added, "The Lord teach you how to die." These were his last words.

49. JOHN JANEWAY, a young minister of England, died a triumphant death. Not a word dropped from him which did not breathe of Christ and heaven. "O, my friends, stand and wonder: was there ever greater kindness; were there ever more sensible manifestations of grace? O why me, Lord, why me? If this be dying, dying is sweet. Let no Christian be afraid of dying: O, death is sweet to me; this bed is soft: Christ's arms, his smiles, his visits, sure they would turn hell into heaven. What are all human pleasures compared to one glimpse of his glory, which shines so strongly on my soul? I shall soon be in eternity; I shall soon see CHRIST himself, who died for me, who loved me, and washed me in his blood. I shall soon mingle in the hallelujahs of glory. Methinks I hear the melody of heaven, and by faith I see the angels waiting to carry me to the bosom of JESUS. And I shall be for ever with the Lord. And who can choose but rejoice in all this?"

50. MATTHEW HENRY. This famous and excellent divine said to a friend a short time before his sudden death, "You have been used to take notice of the sayings of dying men; this is mine: that a life spent in the service of God, and communion with him, is the most comfortable and pleasant life that any one can live in this world."

51. PRESIDENT EDWARDS died with as much calmness and composure as if going to sleep. He was in the full possession of reason to the last, and looked into eternity as into his Father's house in the heavens. "Never did any one more fully evidence the sincerity of his profession by one continued, universal, calm, cheerful, and patient resignation to the divine will, than he," said his physician. "Not one murmur, not one whisper of his was heard indicating

discontent. When some were deploring his departure as a frown on the college, and as a heavy stroke on the church, not being sensible that he heard them, he turned his dying eyes on them, and said, 'Trust in God, and you need not fear.'" These were the last words that this great and pious divine spoke on earth.

52. The apostolical WHITEFIELD uttered this noble sentiment when a Christian friend asked him what *his* dying testimony would be: "My dying testimony is this: I HAVE PREACHED CHRIST A LIVING TESTIMONY;" a sentiment perfectly in keeping with his zeal, his piety, his fervor, his incessant labors in the ministry, and his wonderful success in winning souls to Christ.

53. Dr. CONDICT, the president of Queen's, now Rutgers' college, New Jersey, was known to be much afraid of death. But he died triumphantly. Feeling his end approaching, he raised himself up from his pillow, and stretching out his quivering hands, he said, "I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith; henceforth is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, shall give me." He then added, "Let us pray;" and having uttered a brief and solemn prayer, he gently leaned back on his pillow, and closing his eyes with his own hands, he soon after fell asleep in Jesus.

54. Dr. DWIGHT, the president of Yale college, closed a most useful and Christian life by a peaceful and happy death. He requested his brother to read to him the 17th chapter of John. While listening to the latter verses of that chapter, he exclaimed, "O what triumphant truths!" Some one recited to him a part of the 23d psalm, and asked him, "Can you now say, *though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil, for thou art with me?*" He replied, "I hope so." He was occupied a great part of his time in speaking; from what could be

gathered, it appeared that he was constantly engaged in prayer and adoration. He expired in peace, without a struggle or a groan.

55. The Rev. Thomas Scott, the commentator, died in 1821. As a faithful minister, a judicious writer, and a holy man, he had few equals. His dying bed may be said to have been sublimely Christian. He exhibited an awful sense of divine things, of the evil of sin, of the purity and holiness of God. And notwithstanding his progress heavenward, what self-abasement he ever manifested! "O Lord, abhor me not," said he in fervent prayer, "though I be *abhorrible*, and abhor myself: say not, 'Thou filthy soul, continue to be filthy still;' but rather say, '*I will, be thou clean.*'" He longed much to be gone: "I am weary of my journey, and wish to be at home, if it be God's will." "Ah, I had thought that I should close the sacred services of this day," the Sabbath, "in heaven." A great part of his time he prayed and thought *aloud*. On one occasion he said, "Posthumous reputation: the veriest bubble with which the devil ever deluded a wretched mortal! But posthumous *usefulness*—ay, in that there is indeed something; that was what Moses, the prophets, and the apostles desired; and most of all, the Lord Jesus Christ." Among the last words he uttered were these: "Lord, support me; Lord Jesus, receive my spirit." To his weeping wife and children he said, with tenderness, "Can any rational being grieve at my departure? Well, *nature* will have its first burst of sorrow, but you will soon learn to view it in its true light." "Christ is my all. He is my only hope." "O to realize the fulness of joy; O to have done with temptation!" "This is heaven begun; I have done with darkness for ever. Satan is vanquished. Nothing remains but salvation with *eternal glory*, ETERNAL GLORY!"

56. Jeremiah Evarts, so well known and beloved by every friend of missionaries, died a triumphant death.

When nearly exhausted, he expressed with great tenderness his affection for his Saviour; and soon after broke out into rapturous expressions: "Praise him, praise him, praise him in a way which you know not of." Some one said to him, "You will soon see Jesus as he is, and know how to praise him." He replied, "O wonderful, wonderful, wonderful glory! We cannot comprehend—wonderful glory! I will praise him, I will praise him! Wonderful—glory—Jesus reigneth!"

57. Mr. HALYBURTON was one of the most learned divines of Scotland, and professor of divinity in the university of St. Andrews. The ablest of his writings is his "*Natural Religion insufficient, and Revealed necessary to Man's happiness.*" He wrote against Lord Herbert, the father of the English deists; and was the first who carried the war into the enemy's camp, showing the absurdity and futility of the deist's system. The chief of his practical works is his "*Great Concern.*" He was a truly devoted Christian, and he breathed out his soul to God in a triumphant death. The following were his last words: "I dare look death in the face, in its most ghastly shape, and hope soon to have the victory over it. Glory, glory to him. O what of God do I see! I have never seen any thing like it. The *beginning* and the *end* of religion are wonderfully sweet. I long for his salvation; I bless his name, I have found him. I am taken up in blessing him; I am dying, rejoicing in the Lord. Oh, I could not have believed that I should bear, and bear cheerfully, as I have done, this rod, which hath lain on me long. This is a miracle. Pain without pain. You see a man dying; a monument of the glorious power of astonishing grace." Some time after he said, "When I shall be so weak as no longer to be able to speak, I will, if I can, give you a sign of triumph when I am near to glory." He did so; for when one said, "I hope you are encouraging yourself in the Lord," being now unable to speak, *he*

lifted up his hands and clapped them, and in a few moments expired.

58. Mr. Augustus M. Toplady closed a long and eminently holy life by a very triumphant death. He said, "O how this soul of mine longs to be gone: like an imprisoned bird, it longs to take its flight. O that I had the wings of a dove, I should flee away to the realms of bliss, and be at rest for ever. I long to be absent from the body and present with the Lord." At another time he said, "O what a day of sunshine has this been to me. I have no words to express it; it is unutterable. O, my friends, how good our God is. Almost without interruption his presence has been with me." Being near his end, having awakened out of sleep, he said, "O what delights: who can fathom the joys of the third heavens!" And just before he expired, he said, "The sky is clear; there is no cloud: come, Lord Jesus, come quickly."

59. Dr. Edward Payson was an eminent Christian, a devoted and faithful minister of the Lord. He had a fine mind, a charming imagination, and an ardent love to his Master. He died a triumphant death. "A young man," said he, "when about to leave the world, exclaimed, 'The battle's fought, the battle's fought, but the victory is lost for ever!' But I can say, the battle's fought, the battle's fought, and the victory is *won!* The victory is *won* for ever! I am going to bathe in an ocean of purity, and benevolence, and happiness, to all eternity." He was heard to express himself in the following soliloquy: "I am a Christian—what then? Why, I am a redeemed sinner; a pardoned rebel. I am a Christian—what then? Why, I am a temple of God; I ought surely to be pure and holy. I am a Christian—what then? I am a child of God, and ought to be filled with filial love, joy, and gratitude. I am a Christian—what then? Why, I am a disciple of Christ, and must imitate him who was meek and lowly of heart.

I am a Christian—what then? Why, I am an heir of God, and hastening on to the abodes of bliss in the skies." Again, "Hitherto I have viewed God as a fixed star; bright indeed, but often intercepted by clouds. But now he is coming nearer and nearer; and he spreads into a sun so vast and so glorious, that the sight is too dazzling for flesh and blood to sustain." On one occasion, when laboring under very acute pains, he exclaimed, "These are God's arrows, but they are sharpened with love." Once he exclaimed, "Victory, victory! Peace, peace!" Looking on his wife and children, he said, "I am going, but God will surely be with you." The last words he was heard to whisper were these: "Faith and patience, hold out."

It is worthy of being noticed, that he gave instructions that after he was dead and laid out, the following label should be laid on his breast, that every one might read it as he took a last look of their pastor's remains: "REMEMBER THE WORDS WHICH I SPAKE UNTO YOU WHILE I WAS YET PRESENT WITH YOU."

And now who that is in his right mind, will not say, "*Let me die the death of the righteous, and let my last end be like his?*"

No. 287.

THE

GENERAL'S WIDOW.

A TRUE NARRATIVE.

BY W. C. BROWNLEE, D. D.

Brother, we are only half awake: we are none of us more than half awake —Legh Richmond.

In 1817, I was called, in the providence of God, to take the pastoral care of the church of ——. It is situated in a rich and beautiful valley, with a chain of mountains sweeping round it in a semicircle; and, for many miles around, all the families of a dense population, with the exception of one or two, belonged to that congregation. Among them was the family of General ——, one of the first agriculturists of the country

When I entered on my pastoral duties the general had deceased, being comparatively a young man when he died. His family was still in mourning for the bereavement; and on the Sabbath, his widow and nine beautiful children, in their deep weeds, attracted the respectful notice and sympathy of all who entered the church. The general and his lady had both descended from a race of intelligent and pious Christians. The colonel, his father, had been no less noted for the gallant spirit and patriotism of his youth, than for enlightened and fervent piety in his advanced years. And the general's lady was among the best educated and most accomplished women of her native county.

But the general had been one of the unhappy victims of error who had been seduced from the ways of the God of his fathers, about the time when infidelity, in its most rude and degraded form, with the noted *Thomas Paine* at its head, made a struggle to gain an ascendency in many parts of our country. "*The Age of Reason*" had with him displaced the Holy Bible, and he drank in those polluted streams until, being perfectly intoxicated with error, he cast off fear and restrained prayer, and openly denied the God of his fathers.

It was on a delightful morning in May, 181–,—I remember it as distinctly as if it had been yesterday—one of the elders of the church came to desire me, as soon as practicable, to visit the general's widow.

"Ah, sir," said he, as tears filled his eyes, "the poor woman has not long to live, and she knows it not. And O, sir, she is ill prepared to die."

In a short time we were on our way, he having kindly volunteered to accompany me to her mansion.

Our ride lay through the beautiful farms of the late General L——d S——g; laid out in square fields of great extent, highly cultivated; with orchards abounding in every variety of fruit-trees, particularly of grafted English cherries, of no less than twelve varieties; and luxuriant fields of grain, affording happy promise to the labors of the husbandman. We soon crossed the bridge over the dark

P——, and ascended the romantic hill which forms its lofty bank. From its summit, which we soon reached, there is a lovely prospect of ten or twenty miles around. All nature was in the glory of spring: the very air was perfumed with the delicious blossoms on every hand.

"What a happy world this would be," said the elder, "if our souls, being purified from sin, did so rejoice in the presence of God as he makes all things smile around us!"

"Yes, my friend; but it is the sanctified and well-regulated mind alone, prepared for the Master's service, which has the capacity of really enjoying his presence in the beauties of nature. That congenial soul sees him in every leaf, and bud, and beautiful flower; hears and adores him in the whisperings of the breeze, the murmuring of the brook, the music of the songsters, as well as in the rushing of the cataract, and the roaring of the mountain storm. He sees him and adores him in every thing. The guilty mind is at enmity with God, and by such a one, the presence of God, in the glorious works of his hands, is neither seen nor appreciated."

"Ah, sir," said he, "that was what the good old colonel would often say to his son, whose widow's mansion we are now approaching. 'I tell thee, boy,' the old Christian would say, 'infidelity paralyzes the noble powers of man, and renders him blind, and deaf, and dead to the joys of God's presence in the kingdom of nature as well as of grace. *Age of reason*, Ha! The age of folly, of mental degradation, and of little men. Why, I tell thee, it requires a clear head and a pure heart to be able to take up the argument of TRUTH. The profane scoffer of the *Paine* school cannot comprehend the delicacy and force of divine reasoning on the goodness of God in nature, and his pure and overpowering love in grace.' Another time, when his son was venturing his doubts touching the Gospel, the colonel exclaimed, 'Doubts, my poor boy! Seest thou that bright sun pouring down his glorious beams? Seest thou those brilliant fields and meadows glowing in their living and breathing beauty under the present Deity? All these—

aye, and my own senses, can I sooner doubt and mistrust, than doubt the love of my God and Redeemer in the kingdom of his providence and grace.' "

We were now entering the long avenue which led up to the house, lined on each side with rows of cherry-trees, now in all the magnificent beauty of their white and purple blossoms.

"I am not quite sure," said I, "whether our visit here will be welcome."

"I am not sure that it will," said the elder; "but what then? We must never think of measuring duty by such considerations as those which move the men of the world."

"You are right," said I. "But tell me, you often visited the late general in company with my venerable predecessor Dr. F——, how were you received in your visits to his death-bed?"

"Always courteously," said he; "but never recognized, I rather think, as Christians. And often has the pastor observed to me, that he never met with a more deeply confirmed infidel. Sir, I witnessed the last interview: it took place on a Saturday. The minister spent several hours at the death-bed of the general; he saw that the last sands of life were fast falling—he died on Monday following—and his anxious soul was in an agony to win him over, if such was the will of God.

"But no argument, no appeal, no prayer, no tears moved him from his infidel principles, or seemed to shake his confidence. Let no man tell me this was the fruit of the infidel's faith, which, like the reviving and exhilarating hopes and faith of the Christian, in *his* creed and in *his* Redeemer, was now sustaining the hope and confidence of his soul. Ah, sir, I knew the contrary. I was his near neighbor; I saw him oftener than the pastor, and in his last hours, oftener than his infidel associates. I saw him in the midnight hours, and in his unguarded moments; I heard him utter thoughts that came fresh from an unveiled and burning spirit. I saw him—I knew him to be a miserable man; but not more so than any other infidel. An infidel die

happy! A happy philosophic death! Die as a philosopher dies! Can any rational being believe what the infidel himself does not, and cannot himself believe? An immortal spirit leave *its* heaven here, and go away into an unknown, dark, dismal oblivion! Even on its own principles it cannot die happy, without its firm belief in an incredible miracle; namely, that a great and polished philosophic soul can be perfectly willing, that is, happy to give up all the heaven it has, for a dark, unknown, hated, and horrid oblivion. Another proof that infidels are not only the *most credulous*, but absolutely the *most duped* of all the children of men. For the general, he would yield to no argument; he was too proud in spirit: he never had hitherto flinched. But, ah, on that Saturday I saw him yield; and I witnessed the confession which, to this day, is well known over our valley. But it was the mere yielding of parental feeling.

"'Well, general,' said the minister, as we rose to go, 'time speeds its course; I must take my leave of you.' He took him by the hand. 'Farewell; I shall never see you more, until you and I stand at the judgment-seat of eternal Justice: farewell.' He paused; the general still kept a hold of his hand. 'Ere I go, I have one question to ask you,' said the pastor: he paused again, and turning, cast his eyes around the circle of the general's sons, his daughters, and his weeping wife: the general's eyes wandered after those of the pastor, over the dear and interesting group. 'Now, hear me,' said the minister; 'my question is this: Is it your will, now, in your last moments, that these dear and beloved beings should follow the *minister, or yourself?*'

"The general looked first at the pastor with an earnest eye, as if to penetrate into his soul: he saw that he was in earnest, for the tears rolled in silence over his cheeks: he rapidly glanced at the circle of his dear children and spouse: he heaved one deep sigh as he clasped his hands on his breast; then resuming his hold of the pastor's extended hand, he said with a solemnity which I never heard from the general before, '*It is my will that they follow the minister.*'

"'Then let me offer up my last prayer at your death-bed,' said the minister, as he threw himself on his knees. And O, sir, he did pour out his soul in such fervent wrestlings as I never witnessed before: all of us wept, except the general. He appeared confounded and bewildered; he seemed conscious that his creed was untenable; he did seem like one looking out for some fearful and undefinable disaster; his reason seemed to reel; but his pride, shall I call it, or obstinacy, prevented him from humbling himself at the throne of grace. He seemed like one given up of God and of man. And he died as he had lived, I fear. And this desperate outbraving of all entreaties and remonstrances of conscience, this reckless clinging to his shipwrecked hope, and defiance of the justice of God his Judge, has tended to harden his family in unbelief, and to efface from their memory all the admonitions, and prayers, and tears of the minister. But here we are at the door," added my friend, "and may God give you wisdom, my dear pastor, to win over to Christ the souls of this desolate family." "Amen," said I, in the extreme anxiety of my spirit, as we advanced to the chamber of the general's widow.

We found her sitting up; but her once beautiful form was wasting away under the disease that was consuming her vitals. She received us with the utmost politeness and kindness. But we soon discovered that it would be impossible to engage her in devout, or even serious conversation. She contrived to resist every attempt to direct her attention in good earnest, to the necessary preparation to meet her Judge. And she abruptly put an end to all our suggestions by a remark of this kind: that "her dear husband died in the belief which she held; such a good man could not be miserable. And as for herself, she never could wish to go to a better place than where he was!"

We parted from her with a heavy heart. I had utterly failed of delivering my message; and at this, and also the second visit, not even the permission was conceded to us of joining in prayer with her.

As I approached the house on the day of my third visit, I felt my mind exceedingly agitated. Here, thought I, is an interesting immortal being now very near the verge of eternity, and, alas, utterly unprepared; and not only so, but this noble spirit of hers is filled with bitter enmity against the cross of Christ.

I found her alone: she was now confined to her bed; and the hectic spot on her pale cheek indicated that her days were nearly numbered. She gave me a cordial welcome, and thanked me for this token of respect in coming again so soon. I blessed the Lord for this favorable opportunity, and in secret implored of him wisdom and skill to do my duty at this critical moment. A long and painful silence followed. At length she broke it, by *asking*, "Is not God goodness itself, goodness in his very nature? Am I wrong in believing also, that he has implanted in every soul the unquenchable hope of happiness? And who will say that infinite goodness will blast the hope which he himself has nursed and ripened in us?"

This opened a fruitful theme of discussion for at least an hour. The following dilemma was respectfully placed before her: "Madam, how do you know that God is *goodness itself?* If from the demonstrations of nature and providence, then from the same evidence do we learn infallibly, that he is infinitely just and awfully severe. You have only to look abroad over the world's history, and contemplate the tremendous exhibitions of his justice in the endless train of the terrible scourges which have swept the men of many generations off the earth. Do these prove simply his unmingled goodness? Again, if you seek your proof from the holy Scriptures, there we are taught that 'He who is good and merciful, will by no means clear the guilty.'" And the argument against *universal happiness* was closed by submitting to her vigorous mind these *two* ideas.

"If you choose to decide the matter by the full and most complete evidence drawn from *Scripture*, then is it obvious that the inspired writer, who uses the same word in Matt. 25 : 46, to express the eternity of the wicked man's

punishment, and that of the righteous man's glory in heaven, without giving us any intimation of his using it in an *infinitely different* sense in the same sentence, has decided the point that the SECOND DEATH of the one party is as enduring and endless as is the LIFE of the other party. The objection that 'everlasting' is applied to the hills and material things, has no force here. To whatever object it is applied, it always means the *longest possible existence of that object.* Here it is applied to the *immortal* soul, immaterial and ever-enduring: to that this punishment will cling as long as the soul exists; that is, FOR EVER AND EVER. And hence, in perfect accordance with this, the punishment of the wicked is pronounced by God to be 'everlasting,' after temporal duration has ceased, and after eternity has commenced. 2 Thess. 1 : 8, 9, etc.

"And, madam, if you choose to settle the point by *reason,* aided by revelation, then you must admit that God will not confer happiness on sinners as long as their sin and impenitence continue. But inasmuch as they die impenitent, and hence descend into eternity full of sin, and still sinning; and inasmuch as neither God, nor themselves, nor any other being will convert them after death, they will continue to hate God and sin against him just as they did before death; and as sin goes on in its self-perpetuating virulence, they will rebel against the most Holy One for ever and ever. Hence, they keep themselves out of heaven, that is, they keep themselves in hell, for ever and ever.

"Besides, Universalists and Infidels are usually believers in *freewill,* in its unlimited acceptation. I pray you, then, madam, how can you, or any of them, pretend to justify God, if he were *to compel* these unconverted men, *against their determination to the contrary,* into a holy heaven, a place which they have all their lifetime abhorred, and which they will as heartily abhor as ever, to all eternity?"

This address I uttered in the mildest terms I could. Her danger excited in me feelings of the intensest earnestness. The effect of these plain and simple truths was visible. There was a solemnity in her words, and in her whole

deportment, which I had not witnessed hitherto. O my God, I thank thee that I am not without some hope that the Spirit of the Lord is visiting her in mercy. Breathe on her, O blessed Spirit!

The following propositions I put into her hand as I left her.

1. There is no power or virtue in sinful man, which can *efficiently* lead him to peace with God and true happiness.

2. To deny a communication from heaven, on the supposition that God has the intention of showing mercy and favor to us, is actually an impeachment of the divine goodness. The infidel system is cruel: on the face of its very first principle, it brings a solemn impeachment against the divine goodness and pity.

3. It is our duty faithfully to determine by a close examination, whether it be by argument, or by delusion and depravity, that we are induced to continue in hostility to God our Maker, and to hate the Holy Bible.

4. No man nor power on earth can prove what the infidel affirms; namely, that the Bible is *not* a genuine revelation from heaven.

5. No man can call Jesus Lord, or give the Bible the reception of true faith, but by the Holy Ghost.

This visit was closed without prayer, it having been declined by her. She noticed the pain which her refusal caused, and retained my hand for several seconds; and I hurried away to conceal my emotions. Her mind, I knew, was not prepared to have these services *urged*, far less *forced* upon her. O gracious Master, grant me spiritual skill, wisdom, and patience to do thy work aright; deliver me from a furious zeal without knowledge; free me equally from the spirit of indolence, coldness, and negligence in duty.

As soon as practicable, I hastened to renew my visit. I found her in company with her daughters and two grown up sons. She was fast fading away, like the sere leaves of autumn, or the snow before the April sun.

"Sir," said she, as by her request I took my seat close to her, "I own myself overcome by those dilemmas which you placed before my mind. '*The simple truth of God is overwhelming.*' That expression of yours, dropped occasionally the other day, I cannot get rid of. Yes, I must even admit—my conscience will not let me equivocate—*if the Bible be true, then Universalism, in which I have taken refuge is false—aye, utterly false!* This is now my deliberate opinion: yes, my children, by the civil law, the deliberate murderer must die; that is to say, be cut off *for ever* from this life, *for ever* from his family, *for ever* from all earthly happiness. I should insult my reason, and never regain self-respect, did I conclude otherwise. *If the Bible be true, then am I sure Universalism is false as Satan.* But then, the Bible—I cannot, I will not, I never can believe it to be a revelation from heaven. Oh, I cannot ——"

I made no reply until she was restored perfectly to self-possession. Her fine mind, which knew no disguise, here betrayed, without concealment, one of the usual and very natural feelings of one who has unhappily been seduced by the impious sophistry of the infidel. In its desperate efforts, the unsettled mind hurries from one false refuge into another, plunging deeper and deeper at each retreat. She had been strong in her confidence in Universalism: the lingering remains of her respect for the Bible were owing to her being taught this sentiment: the delusion had rapidly vanished under the light of reason, conscience, and the plain exhibiting of divine truth: and the deep current of hatred, quickened by the disappointment, was directed, in all its force, against the Holy Bible.

I endeavored to draw her attention to the NECESSITY of a divine revelation, and exhibited in a plain manner the usual arguments on this point, taken chiefly from *Horne's Introduction.* And I concluded, by illustrating the *second* proposition, which I had submitted to her consideration at a former meeting.

"Do you believe that God is good?" "Undoubtedly

he is," she replied. "Do you believe that God intends to be merciful and gracious to us?" "I do believe it." "Then, my dear madam, if you admit all this, and yet obstinately deny that God has spoken to us one kind word, or one cheering promise, you take away the very basis of this belief; you have thence no ground of faith, nor of the humblest hope in mercy, or pity, or love, from him. In fact, you impeach his goodness and mercy. And that malignant being who goes about to compass the ruin of immortal souls, could alone counsel and devise such a horrid scheme."

She turned her head round on the pillow, and placing her hand on her brow, remained some time in deep meditation. "Ah, dear madam, who can have persuaded you that our heavenly Father, who intends to be so merciful and gracious to us, does, nevertheless, never utter one word of peace—never send one ray of light—never make one communication from heaven to us? Believe it who will, I cannot. None but the heartless infidel can cherish an idea so melancholy, and so opposed to divine goodness."

"I cannot, I do not believe the Bible; it is no revelation from heaven," cried she, waving her hand and turning her face away from me. A long and painful silence ensued. I implored in secret that the Master would give me prudence, and the tongue of the wise who win souls to Christ. Then, as if nothing had fallen from her lips, I begged her permission to review the *fourth* proposition formerly submitted to her. "With your leave, my dear madam, I shall presently examine the evidence of the Holy Bible, *external* and *internal;* but there is a previous question with you. Are you aware that the infidel school can never prove what they assert, namely, *that the Bible is* NOT *a revelation from heaven?*"

This excited her deep attention. I went on. "Have you, or any of all your school, from Celsus down to the humblest writer of the *canaille,* searched this sacred volume itself critically, historically, in the originals, or in its various translations? No one who has not done this has

any claim to be heard, or even to be reckoned a sensible believer in the infidel creed. Have your champions searched all the evidence of the Jews, and their writings? Have they searched all the evidence attainable from every Christian in the world? Have you conversed with angels, and collected the evidence that those pure intelligences can communicate? Have you sought out all the evidence attainable from departed spirits now in heaven, or from the doomed spirits now in hell? No. Then your researches for evidence, even after all the labors of thousands of years, can scarcely be said to have yet begun. Now, until this infinity of sources be perfectly examined, no one of you can have faith in the infidel creed. You may imagine a faith and a peace of mind. You may stifle conscience. But if you only act as reasonable beings, you must ever be in a state of agonizing doubt. Hence, there can be no peace, no joy. You must, in fact, cease to think or act as rational beings, and you must drown your noble powers in the perdition of this world's profligacy before you can cease to feel the agonies of remorse. And even all these are wretched opiates, out of the sleep of which you will one day awake to acuter and more horrible agonies."

Both of her sons, who had imbibed infidel opinions, had come close up to us, and were listening with deep attention. At the close of the argument, they cast an anxious and searching look on each other, and then on their mother; while her eyes were scrutinizing their looks, as if imploring their aid against these dilemmas. They were agitated, but remained silent.

"If you discover any defect in this argument, young gentlemen, you will confer a favor on me to name it; but if there be truth in it, O, in the fear of your Maker, I beseech you, resist it not. We can have no interest, either of us, in being deceived in a matter of this solemn importance."

For the first time, I saw a tear quivering in the mother's eye, and stealing down her faded cheek. "O, my God," said I, in the secret agony of my heart, "break, break in

pieces this hard and flinty heart. O, is not thy word as a fire and a hammer?" I rose to take my leave, not wishing to check this first flowing of emotions from the flinty rock: she retained my hand for some moments: there was a mental struggle. "Oh, you will not go away thus—you will surely pray with us," said she, with a sweet and imploring look. "Blessed be the Lord, who has heard us, and put this at last into your heart," said I, with emotions which I could not overcome. I felt as if a ray of hope had burst through the dark gloom, and beamed on this beloved being, for whom our souls had been in travail. We kneeled down by her bed; and Oh, I thought I felt the reviving presence of the Holy Spirit with us in prayer, and believed his power was awakening deep convictions in her for whom our souls were poured out. And yet, when I bethought me of the deceitfulness of the heart, and in a special manner, the fearful malignity of the spirit of deism, I seemed to hope against hope; while I cried unto God, and said, "Come from the four winds, O Spirit of the Lord, and breathe upon this dying mother and her family."

At the next visit I was grieved to find her tender impressions gone, or carefully concealed; and I thought with pain of that message of the Lord, "Your goodness is as the morning cloud; and as the early dew it goeth away." O my God, slay the enmity of this sin-stricken heart by the sharp sword which issueth out of thy mouth, even thy living and powerful word.

At this and the following visit, by her leave, I went over the evidence of the authenticity and divinity of the Holy Bible. I conducted her active and acute mind over the *historical* evidence. She listened with attention and eagerness to the testimony of the Christian fathers, from Augustine back over the early centuries, and up to the apostolical fathers; while I demonstrated to her that not only all these, but that *heathen* writers also, and *opponents*, such as Celsus, Porphyry, and Julian the Apostate, freely quoted these books called THE BIBLE, as genuine and authentic writings. *Every ancient antagonist admitted these*

books of the Bible to have been written by the men whose names they bear.

"The inspired writers possessed the gift of tongues and the power of working miracles: they healed the blind, the maimed, the lame, and raised the dead. All this was done publicly before the church and their enemies. And having thus established their divine mission from God, they presented publicly to the church the books written by them, as the accredited messengers of God. Thus the miraculous powers and gifts established the fact of their apostolical commission from God: this was their grand object. And the fact of their being the authors of these books was established by the living and credible witnesses, even all Christians, in their days, who received these books publicly from their hands, and deposited them in their archives, and transmitted the *autographs* to their children. Now, when these books of the New Testament were written, there were hundreds of thousands of Christians alive: these with one voice declared that they saw the apostles work miracles: 'We knew them, and believed most truly that they were sent of God: we know these books to have been given by them, for we received them as a public deposit, and as such we transmit them to our children.'

"No one book, nor even a single sentence, could be added to these inspired books without speedy detection. This could not happen in *the apostles' lifetime: they* were alive to expose to the church the imposture. This could not happen *after their decease;* for by this time copies were multiplied, and the holy Scriptures were in every church in Asia, Europe, and Africa. In fact, dear madam, it would be as easy and as practicable to add a new chapter or a new sentence to the common law of the land, or to a national charter, or to abstract from them, as it would have been to palm a new book of holy writ, or even one sentence, on the watchful church of God."

Here we were interrupted, and at her request I closed with prayer; and with many tears she was commended to God, the great and good Shepherd of Israel, who gathers

the wandering sheep from "all places whither they have been driven in the cloudy and dark day."

In a few days my visit was renewed with an interest now daily increasing. I met her physician, who whispered in my ear to take courage: "She has at length commenced a diligent reading of the Bible: her attendant reads to her as long and as often as her weakness can sustain it. But it is singular," added he; "*she will hear only out of the Old Testament.*"

After an affectionate salutation from her, with her permission I proceeded in the examination of the *internal evidence* of the Scriptures: I pressed upon her attention the evidence of their divinity, from the peculiar *sublimity* of their conceptions of God and his perfections, and their spotless *purity*. "The genius and the wits of Greece and Rome never, in one thought or conception, attained any thing similar, far less equal to the sublimity of their conceptions of God; and never, in one instance, to any thing resembling their spiritual purity. There is evidently something on the pages of the Bible altogether superhuman. Unassisted human nature would let fall of necessity, as in fact we see it invariably does in all matters and in all human writings, the stain of its own impurity. Good men, having the fear of God before their eyes in all things, could not practise a deception on the world, and give out their own impostures as from God. And most manifest is it, that no wicked man could have conceived such pure and heavenly doctrines in his mind; far less, by any combination of his associates, have formed a system breathing nothing but spotless purity in morals and religion. And then notice the perfect *harmony* of all the parts. These tracts which compose the volume of the Bible, were written, some of them, by kings and princes; some by statesmen; some by peasants and herdsmen; men living over a period of *fifteen hundred years*, who never saw and never conversed with each other. Such a perfect harmony in views and in sentiments, on any subject, existing among some *fifty* men, even in our times, and who had even all seen and conversed

with each other, would absolutely be pronounced *a miracle* by even the Deist.

"Their purity in waging a war of extermination against all sin—even in the secrecy of the heart's emotions and desires—and their irresistible efficacy in subduing the hearts of the children of men, exhibit the proofs of their divinity. They convert the passionate man into a lamb; the avaricious into benevolent Christians; the timorous and cowardly into courageous soldiers of the cross; so that, at the call of their Lord, they can despise fires and torments. They have converted the lewd into pure and chaste persons; the cruel and bloodthirsty into kind-hearted and courteous Christians; the unjust, foolish, and notorious offender they have rendered equitable, prudent, and holy. Nay, so great, says Lactantius, in one word, is the force of divine wisdom, that when infused into the heart, it expels, by a single effort, folly, the mother of sin. And these are *moral miracles*, which you and I witness weekly; as the church has witnessed them in all ages. In the days of the apostles, hundreds of thousands, once vile and debased heathens, but then clothed in the robes of righteousness and holiness, stood up as the living witnesses of this irresistible power of the Gospel, and of its moral miracles. And from that period millions, in their successive generations, have borne their testimony, with all the force of a moral demonstration, to the all-powerful influence of the blessed Gospel of Christ. They have done—and done before the eyes of the shrewdest and most cunning opposers—what no human eloquence, no human reasoning, no human persuasions, no energy of philosophy, no created authority, or force, ever could do. They have illumined the darkest minds; subdued and softened the hardest hearts; overcome the most obstinate pagan and idolater; and returned them to society, virtuous, pure, and holy men: they have soothed their mental agony in the dying hour, and led them to rest and glory in eternity. In a word, that has been done by them, which God only does by his own selected means. Hence, the seal of heaven's testimony is set to them, that they are

God's most holy truths, used by him, and owned by him, before all."

During this last address the widow was bathed in tears; and often uttered, in a low and tremulous moan, "O my God. O my distracted soul. God, pity my weakness. Mercy, O Lord, mercy on me; and heal my blindness, if I am in error."

Kneeling down, I once more mingled my tears with hers, and offered our fervent supplications to the prayer-hearing God for his quickening and forgiving grace to this broken-hearted woman. I did feel as if I was now wrestling in hope. "O heavenly Father, dissipate this dark cloud of sorrow: bring in this poor wanderer: receive her to the bosom of thy love. O God, say unto her, in the effectual workings of thy free Spirit, Daughter, thou art loosed from thine infirmities; go in peace. O bring her to the foot of the cross of Christ: there let her be found sitting, clothed, and in her right mind." And yet I could not resist the fearful forebodings which came over my mind as I rode home. O the fatal influence of infidelity; so congenial to corrupt reason; so soothing to the depraved heart; so subservient to the vicious desires and appetites; so potent in its seductions. I dared scarcely indulge a hope. "But O, most merciful Father, thy Spirit is able to subdue the most obstinate heart: I present her at the foot of thy throne: O descend, Holy Ghost, in thy subduing influences: renew her soul: O pluck the brand from the flames. To thee I commit her."

In a day or two I renewed my visit; and at her request, after prayer, I discussed with her the evidence of *miracles and prophecy*. She lent her deep and serious attention to the subject.

I studied to remove her difficulties on miracles, and show her that a miracle is just as susceptible of proof as any other fact or public event of history. "Christ and his apostles came before the public, and called on all men, in the name of God, to believe the Gospel and repent of their sins. In evidence of their divine mission, they invited all

to bring out their blind, their maimed, the impotent, the dead; and with *a word* they healed them all, *instantaneously*, and called the dead to life in the presence of their foes. And in their appeals to the multitude they said, We have cured all your diseased, and raised your dead, now believe us as the accredited messengers of God: believe in Christ, who, by miracles performed by his own unborrowed, underived power, has shown himself to be the Son of God, come down to save the lost world: believe in our messages from him: believe in these our written testimonies, which we now publicly deliver to you, and leave in the bosom of the church, to be transmitted to posterity.

"And they did so in the very seat of opposition, even in Jerusalem. Within a few days after the descent of the Holy Ghost at pentecost, there were many thousands converted to the Christian faith in that city; and no mean men were they: there were among them some of the chief priests, some of the chief men of the nation; men who had been witnesses of all the leading events in our Lord's life and death; and even those who had taken an active part in his trial, and in putting him to death. These being converted by the Spirit of God, stood up and publicly declared that they had seen these miracles, and felt the power of them on their own bodies, and on those of others before their eyes. To suppose that so many of the most intelligent persons in Jerusalem and Judea should thus be imposed upon, and induced to declare publicly that they believed what they knew to be false, would, in fact, be the supposition of a miracle greater in its very nature, and surrounded with more difficulties than what any infidel, even of the most extraordinary credulity, would care to encounter. It is, in fact, an assertion by a few men no ways worthy of credit, that several thousands of people, the most virtuous in Jerusalem, and some of them the foremost men of the nation, had all, without any accountable motive, suddenly conspired to become an army of impostors."

I paused to give the widow or her sons time to reply; neither answer nor objection was offered.

The discussion of the evidence drawn from *prophecy* was taken up, and at her request continued at intervals, as she was able to sustain it. We went over the field of prophecy touching the Jews and other ancient nations, and also those which respect events of a more recent date: we pointed out instances of fulfilment in the New Testament era, and also those now actually being fulfilled, relative to Jews, and Mohammed, and popish Antichrist. See Horne's Introd., vol. 1, chap. 4, sect. 3.

I had observed more than once, in my intercourse with this family, and indeed with all other Deists whom I had met, that whenever we entered on cool and deliberate argument, on *miracles, prophecy,* or *historical evidence,* they chose usually to say little, or nothing. It occurred to me that, with a few exceptions, infidels are led by prejudice, or a vitiated taste, or a depraved heart, to adopt their theory; and, with few exceptions, they contrive to keep themselves in it by scoffing or ridicule, and not unfrequently by rude and boisterous merriment. Argument and investigation seem out of the question. They fulfil, to the letter, the divine prediction, "There shall come in the last days scoffers, walking after their own lusts;" there being many things which they are "willingly ignorant of."

I availed myself of an opportunity of drawing the attention of the family to this; and I was speedily convinced that, of all their antipathies, no one is stronger than that against the devoted "*ministry.*" This occupied our attention, in a singular discussion, the most of an afternoon.

I asked a question for information—it was this: whether, next to the "*minister,*" they did not feel an unconquerable aversion to the peculiar ordinances of the Gospel, namely, *baptism* and the *Lord's supper?* They seemed surprised at the question, but frankly admitted that they did; that they not only *ridiculed* them, as they did the priests, but even *detested* them.

I replied that it would, to me, have been inexplicable, if they had not hated them: and I went on to show them, that this proceeds from a deep principle in the corrupt

heart, and is cherished by the master spirit who opposes Christ.

I set out in the discussion, by insisting on the distinction between the true pastor and the false pretender, the Romish priest: *two* beings as distinct as the lawful magistrate, and the fell despot. And by an appeal to reason and history, and to the character and office of the two—the one being *the minister of Christ*, the other *the priest of antichrist*—I succeeded in removing much of the odium, and, thence, very much of their prejudice. The "minister" comes not to lord it over the conscience; not to persecute; not to offer any new *sacrifice* "for the quick and the dead:" "Christ, by his one sacrifice, has for ever perfected them that are sanctified." But he comes in the meekness of an unassuming teacher: he relies on no civil authority, no human power: he comes with no armor but the armor of truth: he comes with no traditions and ordinances of man: he appeals to the public documents of Christianity—"to the law and the testimony." Out of these, lying open to every man's inspection, he reasons, and teaches, and urges, not as a lordly tyrant, but as the humble and devout follower of his divine Master.

"And the influence of their moral exertions and religious labors in a nation are incalculable in their importance. There is one nation set up as a beacon on the stormy ocean; I mean France, and she has the lesson before her, written in blood. Had the Bourbons not destroyed the reformed ministry of France by a long series of persecutions—and thus overthrown the spiritual guides of the people, and quenched the lamps of truth—never would she, probably, have experienced the reign of atheism and terror in the old revolution.

"Besides, my dear friends, the ministry exercise no dominion, no deceptions of 'priestcraft;' they usurp no power not given to them from the word of God and the voice of the people. It is the Christian community who call out the ministry and sustain them. *This the infidel 'is wilfully ignorant of!'*" This produced a deep sensation on the young men.

"Now, my friends, permit me to conduct you to the main point—and one which you, I presume, have always overlooked," said I, availing myself of Leslie's four rules, in his *Short Method with the Deists.*

"We can demonstrate the truth and the facts of Christ's miracles, resurrection from the dead, and the gospel system and history, just as easily as you can, by national monuments, demonstrate the fact of our national Declaration of 1776."

I paused. They begged me to proceed. "Let me have your careful attention, then, to our *four rules.* 1st. The matters of fact commemorated, must be such that *man's senses* can be judges of them. 2nd. These deeds and facts must have been *publicly done,* in the face of men. 3d. Not only must *public monuments* have been set up, but certain *outward actions* performed in memory of these events. 4th. These monuments and outward actions must have been instituted, and must have commenced, *at the time* when the facts took place.

"Now apply these *four rules* to the miracles of Moses and his times, and to the miracles of Jesus Christ and his times. Let us, in order to be brief, confine ourselves to the last, namely, the miracles of Christ.

"In accordance with the first *two* rules, the miracles of our Lord were palpable to men's senses, and publicly performed before men: such as the raising of Lazarus from the dead; curing all manner of diseases, instantly, by a word; and finally, his own resurrection from the dead: they were public, that is to say, before witnesses. Will you admit this?"

They nodded their assent with an interest which convinced me that I was understood. I went on.

"Now, as the national rites of the Jews, and also the dedication of the *Levites* to the office of the priesthood, were the national monuments to perpetuate the knowledge of these facts; even so the gospel ministry, and the holy ordinances of the New Testament, are set up as the grand monuments to commemorate the Saviour and his works.

The same eyes and the same ears that witnessed the miracles of our Lord—and thousands witnessed them—saw these evangelical monuments set up and corresponding actions enjoined on their faithful observance. "Do this in remembrance of me." "Go ye and preach the Gospel to every creature, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost."

"And fourth, these monuments were set up at the very date of those facts and miracles. And, like our own national monuments of the *fourth of July*, and our republican magistracy, they have continued to this day, in a regular succession, in memory of these facts and events. And I do aver, that it is just as reasonable to assert that an impostor could persuade twelve millions of people that they keep the *fourth of July* in memory of what *never took place*, or could palm the body of our republican magistrates on the American republic, under a charter which never existed, as to maintain with the Deist, that the Gospel and its institutions are the inventions of priestcraft.

"The Gospel is as much a law to the Christian churches, as the laws of Moses were to the nation of the Jews. This Gospel declares, on the face of it, that these monuments, and the public office of the ministry, were appointed by Christ; and are to continue in unbroken succession to the end of time.

"Now, let us suppose, as the Deist does, that this Gospel is a fiction; and, of course, *invented*. If *invented* in ancient times, and put forth under the names of the apostles, of course it must have been instantly detected by the living apostles and their thousands of Christian converts. In this era, then, they cannot date the age of the fiction. If a fiction, then it must have been *invented* in some period or other after Christ, and after the apostles had departed this life. Now, mark it well: if invented after them, then, at the time of the invention, there could be no public monuments, no ministry of the Gospel, no baptism, no Lord's supper, on the part of the Church, unless—what would be an extraordinary supposition—the cunning impostor in ques-

tion did actually, by a miracle, *invent* and make all these public monuments; and moreover did succeed in persuading all the Christian nations and people to believe that they had actually been observing public rites, and had actually seen the gospel ministry publicly officiating—when, on the Deist's supposition, they did not, previous to that moment, actually exist!

"On the other hand, if the cunning impostor who invented the Gospel, appeared before men simply *with the Gospel as a written record,* unaccompanied by any monuments, and without the clergy as its ministers, to expound and teach; then that Gospel bore on the face of it the evidence of its own falsehood. It declares on its first pages, that this gospel ministry and these holy ordinances did exist, and were used and celebrated by corresponding actions, in all times of the Gospel; and yet these very monuments mentioned and appealed to by this impostor's gospel, were never yet seen, and never yet heard of, on the Deist's allegation!

"But here are monumental actions and official characters existing in the successive generations from our Lord's resurrection: no man could palm these on the nations and Christian churches—these hold forth the Gospel from Christ; and their evidence is as irresistible and as decisive in favor of the facts and truths of the Gospel, to say the least, as the national monuments of our *fourth of July,* and our Declaration of Independence, and our body of the magistracy, prove, with irresistible demonstration, that we did separate from England, and did establish a republic in 1776.

"And hence, in conclusion—this being the grand end of the monumental *actions,* and *offices*—it is just as natural that the great adversary of Christ and his truth should stimulate into operation all possible hatred and malignity against them, as that he should excite all possible opposition to the divine evidence of his holy word. If the children of infidelity and darkness did not persecute the '*priesthood,*' and hate the sacred ordinances of the Gospel, then

could the adversary view unmoved, and without opposition, all the grand and palpable evidence of God's Gospel by these monuments. In one word, in proportion as Satan and his emissaries pursue, with unrelenting malignity, the ministry and the ordinances of Christ, so do they indicate their perception and deep conviction that their existence is an irrefragable evidence of the truth of the miracles and facts on which the glorious Gospel is immovably based!"

The attention of the young gentlemen was excited by this to the highest degree. It was evident that they never had seriously examined into the nature, uses, or ends of these evangelical *monuments.* And as they expressed some anxiety to pursue this argument at length by themselves, I put into their hands the original of LESLIE'S SHORT WAY WITH THE DEISTS.

The next week, when I renewed my visit, my good friend, who had been with me at the last discussion, whispered in my ear, as we approached the sick chamber, "*Sir, you must shoot lower!*"

I had not a moment to reflect on this hint, nor did I conceive, at the moment, his meaning; in an instant we were by the death-bed of the general's widow.

I found that she had been studying the New Testament, at last; the Holy Bible lay open, on a small round table by her bedside; it was open at the seventeenth chapter of John. She had been weeping over it: several tear-drops still moistened the sacred leaves. Yet, in the course of conversation with her on the state of her mind, I could discover that we had only shaken her confidence—in no small degree, it is true, in that deceitful system in which she had been seeking repose. This was indeed much, but, alas, there was the same cold and deathlike aversion of the soul to Christ, and, I feared, an utter repugnance to his precious doctrines, and an obstinate aversion to the yielding up of her soul in submission to him.

These six weeks we had been laboring; and yet little progress, apparently, had been made. The words of the elder now occurred to me: "*I must shoot lower.*" Hith-

erto I had been exhibiting the outworks of the Holy Bible: now for its precious hidden treasures, its peculiar doctrines, the doctrines of the cross; now we come to close quarters; and may the Holy Spirit direct us. Amen.

At this and my next interview I drew her attention to the nature of sin, viewed in the holy light of God's spotless purity and impartial justice. I dwelt on its terrible influence on the soul and the heart; its bitter fruits; its terrible guilt, as committed against the Holy One. I endeavored to bring before her mind its appalling evils, entailed on man in this world; its inconceivable terrors on a dying bed; its fearful retribution in the world to come. Behold the displays of God's holy indignation against sin; behold his anger against it, in all the evils which infest our world—wars, famine, pestilence, death in every appalling form: it has turned the world into a Golgotha, and it has formed the bottomless pit! O, who can conceive, who describe the evil of sin—"the abominable thing which God hates!" And opening the Bible, I repeated certain texts with the solemnity befitting the subject. "God is jealous, and the Lord revengeth: the Lord revengeth, and is furious: the Lord will take vengeance on his adversaries, and he reserveth wrath for his enemies: he is slow to anger, and of great power, *and will not at all acquit the wicked.*" "Upon the wicked God will rain snares, fire and brimstone, and a horrible tempest: this shall be the portion of their cup." "They shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord and the glory of his power—when he shall come to be glorified," etc. etc. "I will gather you into the midst of the furnace, and I will blow on you in the fury of my wrath, and I will leave you there, and melt you." Ezek. 22 : 18–22. O then, "can thine heart endure, can thy hands be strong in the day that I shall deal with thee? I the Lord have spoken it, and I will do it." O wretched condition of the sinner! God is angry with him every day; he hardeneth his heart against his Maker: "he makes his brow as brass, and his neck a sinew of iron!" "He hideth himself in his false refuges;

he flatters himself in his extravagant delusions: he saith in his heart, there is no God; there is no justice; there is no punishment! He wars against conscience, and reason, and God; until the hatefulness of his iniquity is found out." "A tempest stealeth him away in the night."

These alarming passages of God's word, and this appeal struck deep into her conscience: she had wept incessantly on her sister's bosom from the time that we had entered on this subject; now her whole soul seemed to be bowed down under the rod of God; and often she moaned out, "O my God, is there no hope? God be merciful to me a sinner!"

These touching exclamations led me instantly to the exhibition of the Lord Jesus Christ and his atonement. I drew her attention to the *necessity* of the atonement: "Without shedding of blood there is no remission." To its *reality*. Having the true and spotless matter of a sacrifice, a holy human nature, he offered up his *one* sacrifice, and once for all. "He was wounded for our transgressions; he was bruised for our iniquities; the chastisement of our peace was upon him, and by his stripes are we healed." "He hath made him to be 'a sin offering' for us, who knew no sin, that we might be made the righteousness of God in him." And, finally, its *perfection*. "The Lord is well pleased for his righteousness' sake: he will magnify the law, and make it honorable." And now, "behold the Lamb of God, who taketh away the sins of the world."

"O my God, I wish——" She paused a long time. "I wish I had known these things years ago. But now—O, they are hid from mine eyes. I sinned against conscience and early instruction—I have sinned against the strivings of the Spirit. O how wickedly I strove against him, and resisted him! Now he has given me up—and there is no hope! *I would not know these things* because I *disbelieved* the Bible."

I now hastened to lay the gospel call before her wounded and broken heart; while I implored of God wisdom and spiritual skill to guide her, and woo her heart to Christ. The call of the Gospel I set before her, taking care that

she should not lose sight of the fearful and just denunciations of the pure law of God. From the top of Sinai I bade her hear the law: "Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things written in the book of the law to do them." I pressed it on her conscience, while I implored of the Holy Spirit that she might be "*so kept under the law,*" as to feel her utter helplessness from the deeds of the law; and that she might "*be shut up to the faith,*" hedged in on every side, that being no longer left to go after false refuges, and self-dependence, and legal hopes, she might be "shut up" to the one new and living way, "the faith of Christ," the simple reliance on HIM ALONE.

I made a long pause, for my emotions had overpowered me. I felt as if choked. I could not find utterance for some moments. I thought of the misery of the sinner, and her guilt. I thought of the infinite purity of DIVINE JUSTICE, with which all sinners do most awfully trifle; I thought of the horrors of perdition, and the worm that never dieth. I thought of this most gracious provision of God's grace by the mediation of his Son. O what misery! O what a remedy! O blinded and most wilful sinners—they will not come unto *him*, that they may be saved! O deplorable condition of this interesting woman; so near the grave, and apparently, so ill prepared! And in a mental agony I wrestled with God for her immortal soul. "O Holy Spirit, come, break, subdue, breathe life into the dry bones: breathe on her soul, and she shall live!"

At this moment the elder drew near; and taking her by the hand, said, "'Turn thee, turn thee, why wilt thou die? As I live, saith the Lord, I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked; wherefore, return ye, and live.' Does not God even stoop to expostulate with thee? hear his voice. 'Come now, and let us reason together, saith the Lord: though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be white as snow: though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool.' Yes, dear lady, thine iniquities are great—thy transgressions are infinite! I lay no flattering unction to thy troubled conscience, but, glory be to his

grace, his mercy is equal to all thy misery; his grace to thy boundless wants. 'Christ is able to save unto the uttermost all that come unto God by him.'"

The widow sobbed aloud; and I could hear her utter in a suppressed moan, "God be merciful to me a sinner! what *shall* I do—what *must* I do, to be saved? I believe the Bible to be from God. Can it lead me to a cure for a broken heart? Is it Jesus Christ?"

"What avails it," continued the elder, not hearing what she said, "that thou shouldest reject the Holy Bible, and urge all the strength of infidel objections against the revelation of Christ? thine immortal soul is quivering like a sere leaf on the autumnal bough, ready to drop into hell. O tell me wherewith thou shalt come before thy Lord, or bow thyself before God? Can the most costly offerings be accepted by thy Judge? How canst thou be justified before HIM who is of purer eyes than to look upon iniquity; who cannot behold it without abhorrence? Can the Judge declare that there is no sin, where thy conscience itself crieth out under the load of thy guilt? Can he who has declared that he will by no means clear the guilty, even now acquit thee without an adequate reparation to law and justice? O may God be merciful to thee a sinner! Deists may prate, and the profane may scoff; but there is a God—there is impartial justice—there is a tremendous bar of judgment! And there is a sentence under which the boldest and stoutest-hearted blasphemer shall quail, as the fiercest demon in eternal darkness has quailed! But O, there is hope for *thee.* Cast away all thy transgressions; there is justification for the chief of sinners."

"O how?" cried she in a transport; "where, dear pastor; by what means; by whom? O that I knew Him, I would come even to his feet."

The elder's manner was severe, but his heart was all kindness: the evidence of this was manifest, for he was shedding tears while he was uttering these searching words. And then allowance must be made for him: he was the neighbor of the general and the widow's family, and he had

long been witness of the virulence and malignity with which the Holy Bible and the Christian religion had been treated in this family; and he thought *no convictions too deep, no remorse too pungent, no repentance thorough enough, in such a penitent.*

She laid her hand gently on mine, and in deep distress repeated, "Tell me, O tell me how, where, by *whom* I can be justified from this overwhelming guilt of my soul."

I hastened to explain the nature of saving faith and evangelical repentance. I dwelt at some length on the nature and manner of justification before God, by faith in the atoning blood of Christ. I implored her, in the name of the Most High, to cast herself on the grace and mercy of God in Christ. "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved." The gospel offer is clear, full, explicit; so also is the call of mercy: "Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest."

"Stop," said she, with a look of mingled emotion— "repeat that again."

"Come unto me"— "Whom?" cried she; "what *me?* who speaks this to me?"

"Christ the Lamb, the dear 'Lamb of God, who taketh away the sins of the world.' 'He bore our sins in his own body on the tree,' that such sinners as you and I may be saved, and never come into the second death. He says this; and his saying is a command. Come, then, unto him: O seek his Holy Spirit, to illumine thee and renew thee. Here is the promise."

"What promise?" cried she, eagerly.

"I will sprinkle clean water upon you, and ye shall be clean: from all your filthiness, and from all your idols, will I cleanse you. A new heart, also, will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you; and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you a heart of flesh." Ezek. 36: 25–27.

"O may I venture?" said she, in a low moan. "Hear," said I, "out of his own word, the authority binding you,

and the reason why you should *venture* instantly. 'Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters, and he that hath no money; come ye, buy and eat; yea, come, buy wine and milk without money and without price. Incline your ear, and come unto me; hear, and your soul shall live; and I will make an everlasting covenant with you, even the sure mercies of David.' 'Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you.' 'The Spirit and the bride say, Come; and let him that heareth say, Come; and let him that is athirst come; and whosoever will, let him come and take the water of life freely.'"

"O, my God, and are *such* promises, are *such* offers made *to such as me?*"

"O yes, to *thee* and the chief of sinners: free is the gospel offer; perfect is the atonement; all-sufficient the blessed Saviour: and you have, as your warrant to come, God's own call. O come unto him: accept him: add not the sin of fresh rebellion to all thy other sins. Believe in him *now*, and thou shalt be saved."

Her face was bathed in tears: she covered her head, and turned herself round into the arms of her sister, who had been all this time supporting her on the bed. A long and deep silence occurred, interrupted only by her low moanings and sobbings of pain and agony. The children hastened into her bedroom, as if anticipating her dissolution. Her son I—— leaned on a sofa opposite her bed, with his eyes fixed with intense interest on us.

The elder had bent his head down on his knees, and was wrestling for her soul in secret prayer; and my spirit, in indescribable emotions, with some faint beamings of joy, was imploring the outpouring of the Holy Ghost. "Come, O breath of the Lord, and breathe on this crushed and broken spirit. O leave her not; let her not return again to folly. Deliver her, O gracious Saviour: bring her up out of the deep waters. Set her feet upon a rock—*the Rock of ages:* put the new song into her lips. Holy Father, hear her, O hear her in these secret wrestlings and agonies of

her soul; and let it be seen that she is a vessel of mercy for the Master's glory. Amen."

The silence was long and distressing, still interrupted by heavy moans and sighs. Meantime her sister, a mother in Israel and a ripe Christian, was whispering instructions and consolations into her ear.

We rose to depart; we were unwilling to interrupt these emotions; and we hoped that these were the labors and travails of the new birth. She pressed my hand, and retained the hold of it for several minutes, without turning round or uncovering her head.

"My dear madam, farewell: may God bless you. You are on the borders of Jordan, for you are fast fading away; and now we take our leave. I may never see you in the land of the living any more: pray, what are *now* your hopes and prospects in the solemn view of eternity?"

I shall never forget the scene that followed. She turned herself slowly round, raised her hands, and clasping them, said, in the most solemn tone, "O, my Redeemer, I take thee—I take thee as my Saviour—now, wholly, only, and for ever." She paused; then added, "I have found thee, O my Redeemer. Long, long have I wandered from thee, my Shepherd; thou hast sought me, even me, in these dreadful wanderings. On thy bosom didst thou lay me, and bring me back. Dear Saviour, in thy righteousness alone have I hope and strength. Rich is the grace that saved a wretch like me."

She spoke this in a low whisper, yet with great animation; and sunk back on her pillow, and gave way to a flood of tears.

The elder looked first at her, then at me, and then round the circle of the children; and in an ecstasy of joy, clasping his hands, and sinking down on his knees, he cried, "Then, dear pastor, let us give solemn thanks: the wanderer that was long lost, is found; and she that was dead, is now alive."

We all kneeled down by her bedside, and offered thanks and praises to the Hearer of prayer, who had in his rich

grace, sought out and brought back the lost sheep from the places whither she had wandered in the cloudy and dark day. And we parted from her, "glorifying God in her behalf;" and rejoicing at the consolations of the Spirit which were abounding in her.

I saw her only twice after this happy issue of her sorrows: she continued to rejoice in hope of the glory of God. She seemed to be steadily engaged in meditation and secret devotion; often repeating, with unusual satisfaction, these gracious words of Christ which had brought her comfort: "Come unto me, all ye that labor;" and delighting much in the daily reading of the Holy Bible. And her pious sister, who was by her night and day, told me that she died with the calmness, resignation, and mild joy of a Christian; breathing out her soul into the bosom of the Redeemer; uttering, in a low whisper, "Lord Jesus, receive my parting spirit: thou hast redeemed me, Lord God of truth."

On the third day her funeral took place. And at the suggestion of my friend the elder, I gave a detailed account of the form of instruction which we had pursued in our first ten visits previous to her conversion. And the most of the inhabitants of that vicinity are alive this day, who heard the detail with emotions and tears of joy. For the church rejoiced in the grace and mercy of her Lord, who had given this signal triumph of his truth over the fell enemy that had sent desolation and woe, in former days, into this family.

No. 288.

FOUR REASONS

AGAINST THE

USE OF ALCOHOLIC LIQUORS.

BY JOHN GRIDLEY, M. D.

In presenting this subject, it shall be my aim to state and illustrate such facts and principles as shall induce every man, woman, and child, capable of contemplating truth and appreciating motive, to exert the whole weight of their influence in favor of the "Temperance Reform." There are *Four Reasons* which claim special attention.

The first reason we would urge, why the use of alcoholic liquors should be altogether dispensed with, is their *immense cost* to the consumers. It is estimated from data as unerring as custom-house books, and the declarations of the manufacturers of domestic distilled spirit, that previous to 1826, 60,000,000 gallons of ardent spirit were annually consumed in these United States; the average cost of which is moderately stated at fifty cents per gallon, and in the aggregate *thirty millions* of dollars.

Thirty millions of dollars annually! A sum which, if spread out in one dollar bank-notes, end to end, would reach *across the Atlantic.* Or, if in silver dollars piled one upon the other, would form a column nearly *thirty miles* high; and which it would occupy a man twelve hours in each day, for almost two years, to enumerate, allowing him to count one every second. Or to suppose a useful application of this fund, it would support annually from *two to three hundred thousand young men* in preparing for the Gospel ministry. In three years it is a sum more than equal to the supply of a *Bible to every family on the habitable globe.*

One-half the amount would defray all the ordinary expenses incident to the carrying on of our nation's governmental operations every year. Thus I might multiply object upon object, which this vast sum is adequate to accomplish, and carry the mind from comparison to comparison in estimating its immense amount; still the cost, thus considered as involving the *pecuniary* resources of the country, is a mere *item* of the aggregate, when the loss of time, waste of providential bounty, neglect of business, etc., incident to the consumption of this one article, are thrown into the account.

A SECOND REASON why its use should be condemned is, the *entire inadequacy of any property it possesses to impart the least benefit*, either nutrient, or in any other way substantially to the consumer, to say nothing just now of its never-failing injurious effects. *Alcohol* consists chemically in a state of purity of carbon, oxygen, and hydrogen; in the proportions of carbon about 52 parts, oxygen 34, and hydrogen 14 to the 100. The addition of water forms the various proof spirits. It can be generated in no way but by *fermentation:* no skill of art has yet been able to combine the above elements in such proportions, or relations, as to produce alcohol, except by heat and moisture inciting fermentation in vegetable substances. But it should be understood, that vegetables may undergo a certain degree of fermentation without producing alcohol; or, if suffered to produce it, another stage of fermentation will radically destroy it, and produce an acid. Thus, any of the vegetable substances, as corn or rye, subjected to a certain degree of heat and moisture, will soon suffer a decomposition, and a development of sugar, to a greater or less degree, will take place. If removed now from circumstances favorable to its farther fermentation, as is the case with dough for bread, etc., no appreciable quantity of alcohol is created. A *further* degree of fermentation, however, is generative of alcohol, and if arrested here, the alcohol maintains its decided character; while still another stage presents the acetous state, and the alcoholic property is lost in vinegar. As

in our opinion, success to the temperance cause depends much upon a right understanding of *what alcohol is*, and the manner of its production, a more simple illustration may not be inappropriate here.

A farmer takes a quantity of apples to the mill in order to convert them into cider. He grinds, then lays them up into a cheese, when pressure is applied, and the juice runs into a vat placed to receive it. Here, at this stage of the business, there is no alcohol in the juice. It is now put into casks, and the sweet or sugar stage of fermentation, which is already begun, soon passes into the vinous or *alcoholic* stage, as it is called, and *alcohol* is formed. The prudent farmer, at this point, when the juice is done *working*, or fermenting, immediately bungs his casks, and does such other things as his skill and experience may suggest, to prevent his cider becoming sour, which it will do if the third stage of fermentation is permitted to succeed. Here, then, he has *perfect alcohol*, though in small proportions; as perfect as it is in brandy, gin, rum, and whiskey. The same results ensue from subjecting corn, rye, barley, etc., to such processes as is customary to prepare them for distillation, namely, to such a degree of fermentation as that alcohol is formed. And when the alcohol is formed by fermentation, then it is drawn off, by distilling, from its union with the other materials in the fermented mass. Alcohol, then, is strictly *the product of fermentation*. It is not, and cannot be produced in any other way. To distil, therefore, is only to lead it off from its union with the vegetable mass, and show it naked with all its virulence.

Having considered the manner in which alcohol is formed, let us examine some of its *properties*. It contains nothing that can afford any nourishment to the body, and consequently it can impart no strength. When taken in certain quantities, diluted with water, as it must be for common use, its effect is, to arouse the energies of the system, and for a while the individual *feels* stronger; but this excitement is always followed by depression and loss of

animal and mental vigor. Thus it is a mere provocative to momentary personal effort, without affording any resources to direct or execute. Hence the fallacy of that doctrine held by some, that to accomplish deeds of daring, feats of muscular strength, etc., with success, demands the drinking of spirituous liquors. Were I about to storm an enemy's battery, with no alternative before me but victory or death, I might, principle aside, infuriate my men with the maddening influence of ardent spirit, and let them loose upon the charge, as I would a wounded elephant, or an enraged tiger. But in attaining an object to which the combined energies of mind and body were requisite, I should never think of the appropriateness of spirituous liquor to aid the effort.

But an objector says, "I certainly *feel stronger* upon drinking a glass of spirit and water, and can do more work than I can without it. I can swing a scythe with more nerve, or pitch a load of hay in less time; and feel a general invigoration of my body during the heat of a summer's day, after having drank a quantity of grog. How is this?" We reply, doubtless you *feel* for the moment all that you describe; but your *feeling strength* thus suddenly excited, is far from being proof that you are *really* any stronger. The opposite is the fact; which we infer from the inadequacy of any substance, be it ever so nutritious, to impart strength so suddenly, as it would *seem* ardent spirit did when drank; for there has not been sufficient time for digestion, through which process only can any substantial nourishment be derived to the body. The *apparent* strength which an individual feels upon drinking ardent spirit, is the same in kind, though not in degree, with that which a man feels who has lain sick with a fever fifteen or twenty days, during which time he has taken little food, and been subjected to the weakening influence of medicines; but who on a sudden manifests great strength, striving to rise from his bed, etc., and in his delirious efforts must be restrained perhaps by force. Now no man in his senses will call this any *real*

increase of strength in the sick man, who has been starving thus long; but only a rallying of the powers of life under the stimulus of disease, which is always followed by extreme languor and debility, if not by death. So it is with the individual under the influence of ardent spirit: he *feels* the powers of his body excited from the stimulus of the spirit; yet, as we think must be clear to the apprehension of any one, without any addition of *actual* strength.

Again, alcohol is not only innutritious, but is *poisonous*. Taken into the stomach in an undiluted and *concentrated* state, in quantities of two or three teaspoonfulls, it destroys life, as clearly shown in Accum's experiments. Combined with different proportions of water, sugar, etc., it is modified in its effects. Most of the vegetable and mineral poisons may be so diluted and modified as to be capable of application to the bodies of men internally, without producing immediate fatal consequences; which, nevertheless, cannot be used any length of time, even thus disarmed, without producing pernicious effects. So it is with alcohol: like other poisons, it cannot be used any length of time, even diluted and modified, without proving pernicious to health, and if persevered in, in considerable quantities, inevitably destructive to life. This last sentiment, however, we will consider more particularly under the

THIRD REASON for the disuse of alcohol: It *destroys both body and soul*. It is estimated that *thirty or forty thousand* died annually in the United States from the intemperate use of ardent spirit before the Temperance reformation began. Thirty or forty thousand! a sacrifice seldom matched by war or pestilence. The blood which flowed from the veins of our martyred countrymen, in the cause of freedom, never reached this annual sacrifice. And the pestilential *cholera*, ruthless as it is, which has marked its desolating track through many of our towns and cities, numbers not an amount of victims like this plague, much as its virulence has been enhanced by ardent spirit. The destructive influence of immoderate drinking upon the

bodily powers of men, is painfully apparent, sometimes long before the fatal catastrophe. The face, the speech, the eyes, the walk, the sleep, the breath, all proclaim the drying up of the springs of life. And although abused nature will often struggle, and struggle, and struggle, to maintain the balance of her powers, and restore her wasted energies, she is compelled to yield at length to suicidal violence.

The effect of the habitual use of ardent spirit upon the health, is much greater than is generally supposed. An individual who is in the habit of drinking spirits daily, although he may not fall under the character of a drunkard, is undermining his constitution gradually, but certainly; as a noble building, standing by the side of a small, unnoticed rivulet, whose current steals along under its foundation, and carries away from its support sand after sand, has its security certainly though imperceptibly impaired, and finally falls into utter ruin. A large proportion of the inmates of our madhouses are the victims of ardent spirit. Our hospitals and poor-houses speak volumes of the ruin that awaits the bodily powers of those who indulge in even moderate tippling. It exposes the system to much greater ravages when disease attacks it. The powers of nature are weakened, and less able to resist disease; and medicines will never act so promptly and kindly upon those who are accustomed to strong drink as upon those who are not.

But where is the *soul*, the disembodied spirit of a deceased drunkard? "No drunkard shall inherit the kingdom of God," is the plain declaration of sacred writ; and were there no such scriptural denunciation of the wretched inebriate, the very nature of his case would render his prospect dark and dismal. In the intervals of his cups, when his animal powers are not goaded by artificial excitement, his distressed spirit partakes of the horrible collapse of its polluted tenement, and can contemplate no motive, however weighty, nor entertain any other thought, be it ever so interesting, than how to relieve its present wretchedness. When, then, can the unhappy man find peace with God

amid this tumult of his unbalanced faculties, this perturbation of his unholy passions? How utterly unfitted to perform those duties which are requisite to secure a blessed immortality?

Our FOURTH REASON for the disuse of alcoholic liquors is, that *any thing short of entire abstinence exposes to all the dread consequences just named.* Here is the grand hope of our cause. TOTAL ABSTINENCE defies all danger and mocks at consequences. With it, we are safe; without it, in peril.

No man was ever *born* a drunkard; nor are we born with a natural taste or thirst for alcoholic drinks, any more than we are born with an appetite for aloes, assafœtida, or any other drug or medicine. And the child when first taught to take it, is induced to do so only by sweetening it, and thus rendering it palatable, as is the case with other medicines. Neither is it, at any time, the taste or flavor of alcohol, exclusively, that presents such charms for the use of it; but in the effect upon the *stomach and nerves* lie all the magic and witchery of this destructive agent. In proof of this, watch the trembling victim of strong drink while he pours down his morning or mid-day dram, and see him retch and strangle like a sickened child at a nauseous medicine. Ask him, too, and he will confess it is not the taste for which he drinks. Intemperate drinking is ever the result of what has been misnamed *temperate drinking.* "Taking a little" when we are too cold, or too hot, or wet, or fatigued, or low-spirited, or have a pain in the stomach, or to keep off fevers, or from politeness to a friend, or not to appear singular in company, etc., etc., or as is sometimes churlishly said, "when we have a mind to."

And here I shall step aside a little from the main argument, and attempt to *explain* the *effects* which *temperate drinking* has upon the animal system; and how it leads to ruinous drunkenness, BY A LAW OF OUR NATURES, certain and invariable. The nervous system, as I have said, is that department of our bodies which suffers most from stimulants and narcotics. Although the circulation of the blood is

increased, and all the animal spirits roused by alcoholic drink; still, the nerves are the organs that must finally bear the brunt and evil of this undue excitement. Thus we see in the man who has been overexcited by these stimulants, a trembling hand, an infirm step, and impaired mental vigor. The *excitability* of our system—and by this term we mean that property of our natures which distinguishes all living from dead matter—is acted upon by stimuli, either external or internal; and it is by various stimuli, applied properly, and in due proportion, that the various functions of life are kept up. Thus a proper portion of food, and drink, and heat, and exercise, serves to maintain that balance of action among all the organs, which secures health to the individual. But if an agent is applied to the system, exerting stimulant powers exceeding those that are necessary for carrying on the vital functions steadily, an excitement ensues which is always followed by a corresponding collapse. This principle is clearly illustrated by the stimulus of alcohol. If a person unaccustomed to its use receives into his stomach a given quantity of distilled spirits, it will soon produce symptoms of universal excitement. The pulse increases in frequency; the action of all the animal functions is quickened; and even the soul, partaking of the impulse of its fleshly tabernacle, is unduly aroused. But this is of short duration, and a sinking, or collapse, proportioned to the excitement, soon takes place, with a derangement, more or less, of all the organs of the body. The stimulus repeated, the same effect ensues. We must, however, notice that the same quantity of any unnatural stimulus, such as opium, spirit, etc., frequently repeated, fails to produce its specific effect. Hence, in order to secure the same effect, it is necessary to increase its quantity. Thus, to a person indulging in the frequent or stated practice of drinking, before he is aware, the repetition becomes pleasant. As the accustomed hour returns for his dram, he regularly remembers it; again and again he drinks; the desire increases; he makes himself believe it is necessary from the very fact that he desires it;

the principle, or law, of which we have been speaking, developes itself; an increased quantity becomes necessary to insure a feeling of gratification; more, and still more becomes necessary, and oftener repeated, until without it he is miserable; his overexcited system is wretched, soul and body, without *the constant strain* which the stimulus affords.

Here is a solution of the fact that has astonished thousands; how the unhappy drunkard, with all the certain consequences of his course staring him in the face, and amid the entreaties and arguments of distressed friends, and the solemn denunciations of holy writ sounding in his ears, and the sure prospect of an untimely grave, will still press on, and hold the destroyer still firmer to his lips. It is because nature shrieks at every pore, if I may be allowed the expression. Every nerve, every vein, every fibre pines, and groans, and aches for its accustomed stimulus. No substitute will do; no ransom can purchase relief; insatiate as the grave, every fibre cries, Give, give! The dictates of reason are drowned in the clamor of the senses. Thus the *temperate drinker, by persisting in the practice,* throws himself within the influence of *a law of his system,* of which he can no more control the development, nor resist the urgency, than he can that law which circulates the blood through his heart, or any other law peculiar to animal life. That law is the LAW OF STIMULATION, which is never unduly aroused, except by sinful indulgences; but when aroused, is dreadfully urgent. We will state a case strikingly exemplifying the influence of this law.

A gentleman, an acquaintance and friend of the writer, contracted the habit of drinking during his college course. He settled in the practice of the law in one of the villages of his native state. He soon became invested with offices of honor and profit, and although young, gave promise of shining brilliantly in the profession he had chosen. He was the pride of a large and respectable family, who witnessed his growing prospects with that satisfaction and delight which the prosperity of a beloved son and brother cannot

fail to impart. In the midst of these circumstances the physician was one day called in haste to see him. He had fallen into a fit. His manly form lay stretched upon the carpet, while his features were distorted and purpled from the agony of the convulsions. After some days, however, he recovered, without having sustained any permanent injury. Being in company with his physician alone, soon after, he said to him, "I suspect, sir, you do not know the cause of my fit; and as I may have a return of it, when you will probably be called, I think it proper that you should be made acquainted with my habits of life." He then informed his physician, that for a number of years previous he had been in the daily use of ardent spirit, that the practice had grown upon him ever since he left college, and that he was conscious it injured him. However, it was not known even to his own family what quantity he used. His physician did not hesitate to inform him of the extreme danger to his life in persisting in the use of intoxicating drinks. He acknowledged his perfect conviction of the truth of all that was said, and resolved to abandon his wicked course.

Not many weeks after, he was seized with another fit; but owing to the absence of the family physician, he did not see him until some time after he had come out of it. The physician, however, who attended, informed him it was violent. After repeated assurances of his increasing danger, and the remonstrances of friends, who had now begun to learn the real cause of his fits, he renewed his promises and determination to reform, and entered upon a course of total abstinence, which he maintained for several months, and inspired many of his friends with pleasing hopes of his entire reform and the reëstablishment of his health. But, alas, in an unguarded moment, he dared to taste again the forbidden cup, and with this fled all his resolutions and restraints. From that time he drank more openly and freely. His fits returned with painful violence; friends remonstrated, entreated, pleaded, but all in vain. He thus continued his course of intemperance, with intervals of fits and sickness,

about eight or ten months, and at length died *drunk* in his bed, where he had lain for two or three weeks in a continual state of intoxication.

The writer has stated this case in detail, to show the influence of *the law of stimulation,* or what in popular language is termed, "the appetite for spirituous liquors," when once it is awakened.

Here we have the instance of an individual, of a fine and cultivated intellect, with every thing on earth to render him happy, that could be comprised in wealth, friends, honor, and bright prospects. Ay, indeed, too, he professed an interest in the blood of the Saviour, and had communed with Christians at his table ; surrounded by those whom he tenderly loved, the wife of his bosom, and the dear pledges of her devotion. Yet, in spite of all these considerations, and the most sensible conviction of his fatal career, he continued to drink, and thus pressed downward to the gate of death and hell.

Now what was this? What giant's arm dragged this fair victim to an untimely grave? Was it for the want of motives and obligations to pursue an opposite course? No. Was it for the want of intellect and talents to appreciate those obligations? No. Was it trouble, arising from disappointed hopes and blasted prospects? Certainly, by those who knew him best, he was accounted a man who might have been happy. What was it, then, that urged this individual, with his eyes open upon the consequences, and in the face of every thing most dear, thus to sacrifice his *all* upon the altar of intemperance? It *was that law* of which we have spoken, enkindled into action by his tippling, and which once developed, he could no more control, *while persisting in his pernicious practice of drinking,* than he could have hurled the Andes from their base, or have plucked the moon from her orbit.

We say, then, that all persons who drink ardent spirit habitually, bring themselves inevitably under the influence of a law *peculiar to their natures,* which leads on to ruin.

Instances may indeed have occurred, in which individuals have used ardent spirit daily for a long course of years, and yet died without becoming drunkards; but it only proves that these have been constitutions that could *resist* the *speedy development* of the law in question. Where one individual is found with a constitution vigorous enough to resist the development of this law through a life of habitual drinking, thousands go down to a drunkard's grave, and a drunkard's retribution, from only a few years' indulgence.

We have thus briefly shown the *immense cost* of the use of alcoholic liquors. We have shown that they contain *no property that can impart substantial strength or nourishment* to the body; and that they are actually a POISON. We have shown that they *destroy* both *body* and *soul;* clouding the view of truth, and resisting the influences of the Holy Spirit. "No drunkard shall inherit the kingdom of God." We have shown that the *temperate use* of these liquors tends inevitably to the *intemperate use;* since those who drink them habitually, throw themselves within the influence of a *law of their natures,* which leads on directly to ruin.

In view of such considerations and such facts, who is so degraded, so enslaved to appetite, or the love of gain, that he will not lend his aid to the TEMPERANCE REFORM? Who will indulge in what he calls the temperate use, flattering himself that he can control his appetite, when thousands, who have boasted of *self-control,* have found themselves, ere they were aware, within the coil of a serpent whose touch is poison, and whose sting is death? O, who that regards his neighbor, his family, his own reputation, or his own soul, will in this day of light be found dallying with that which affords at best only *sensual* pleasure, and which *at the last biteth like a serpent, and stingeth like an adder?*

No. 289.

TO A LADY

IN

FASHIONABLE LIFE.

My dear Friend—The long and uninterrupted friendship which has existed between us, and the deep interest I have felt in the best good of your family, will excuse me for claiming your indulgence, and for speaking with unusual freedom. You are aware that I have been led to regard some of the customs of fashionable life in which we have indulged, in a new light; and knowing my opportunities for observation, you will, I am persuaded, allow my opinions their full weight. You are not without occasional solicitude for your own future welfare; and you often look with trembling anxiety on your sons and your daughters: and amid all the temptations that surround you, it is reasonable that you should.

I shall confine my remarks at this time to dancing assemblies and the theatre. The *first* you have considered as essential to an accomplished education for your children; and the *second*, as an innocent, if not a useful recreation, both for yourself and them.

To secure for your children an agreeable and fashionable indulgence in the first, it often seems necessary to commit them early to the care of men with whom you would not associate, and whose very profession is a bar to truly refined and virtuous society. To such characters, not unfrequently the very refuse of foreign and corrupted cities, you must send your children to learn ease and gracefulness of movement and manners. You must send them from your own home, not unfrequently to places of public and hazardous resort, and this too at an age of tenderest and most delicate sensibility, and at hours of the greatest exposure. Is all this exposure warranted by the object to be secured?

Passing by considerations of loss of time, health, and waste of intellectual resources, I appeal to your sense of propriety, as a lady and a mother, if the movements, attitudes, and evolutions of modern dancing are not inconsistent with those pure and delicate sensibilities which you wish your sons and your daughters to cherish, and hazardous to those principles which you would wish to cultivate? Under all the exciting influences of society, music, and refreshments peculiar to the time and place of this recreation, do you not tremble for their safety? Not only the principles of pride, vanity, and extravagance are fostered, but delicate sensibility and unsullied purity are left exposed, and often rudely assailed.

Your children, with all the youth of our city and our country, are more or less exposed to vice and ruin; and the fact should not be withheld, that there is no resort of wide and ruinous debauchery, where the young and unsuspecting are decoyed, to which *music* and *the dance* are not considered as *essential tributaries.* Around these habitations is thrown a brilliancy that catches the eye, while strains of enlivening and voluptuous music salute the ear; and within, the lascivious movements of the dance bewilder and enchain the young, till the unsuspecting and the matured in vice sink together in the embrace of infamy and death. Can this be gainsaid? *No.* These thousand receptacles of robbery and crime are sustained and upheld by enchanting music and the dance. Grant that this amusement is innocent in itself, it is from its very nature tributary to the evils of which I speak.

Consider also what communities and what nations are most addicted to indulgence in this amusement. France and Italy. And as to morals and virtue, purity and chastity, what are France and Italy? Facts here are too appalling to be disclosed.

There is, unquestionably, from the nature of the amusement itself, even in its most innocent form and limited exercise, a tendency to inflame passion, to poison virtue, endanger purity, and to lead on to more gross and deadly evils. If not, then sin and death have seized an innocent recreation, and made it to subserve their cause, in maturing crimes at which humanity shudders, and in annihilating hopes and destroying souls beyond computation. And who that is

wise will cultivate and allow recreations at such perils as these?

I will take but one other view of this subject at this time. You are destined to the grave, and with your offspring to the judgment-seat of Christ. You and they are always liable to death. And as dying and immortal beings, would you crowd the last days and hours of life with such recreations, even though esteemed innocent? Ah, there is in your very nature a shrinking back from them, as you bring eternity to view. The conflagration of that house of mirth, and the youth falling dead in the midst of such pleasures, send a shock to the soul, and that too, wholly unlike the emotion that swells the heart, as the crowded ship sinks in the sea, or a soul, by an explosion, is sent in a moment to eternity. And why this difference of feeling? Simply, the moral difference of circumstances under which these souls exchanged worlds. Moral principle decides this instinctively, and tells us plainly, that there is something besides innocent recreation here. As the youth in his gayety fell from the precipice and was lost in the raging stream, we were drawn to the fatal spot with tenderest sympathy; while he who falls and mingles his dying groans with sounds of mirth, appals the very heart of affection. This moral impression no man can erase, and it is no doubtful monitor of the tendency of this amusement.

The remaining subject upon which I wish to speak, is that of the THEATRE. Its tendency is obviously still more immoral, and it sweeps in its resistless tide countless victims to disgrace and death. I have always been astonished, even in my most youthful days, that ladies called respectable should frequent a theatre, and allow their daughters to be there. I have been led to believe they could not be aware of its true character. Though you are not a stranger to the theatre, there may be facts connected with it which have escaped your observation, and which show it to be a perilous place for your children.

You are not ignorant of the low repute in which the stage has been held ever since its establishment, and that no man can remain a respectable member of society who becomes a public actor. Both in heathen and in Christian countries, infamy is attached to the profession. Whether this arises from the corrupting influence of the scenes acted,

or from a just impression of the moral character of the stage, it is not necessary to inquire. My object is simply to show that the theatre is unsuited to the refinement of female character, and often fatal to youthful purity.

You are aware that it is not a place for the cultivation of female delicacy. You must allow that there are few tragedies or comedies, presented on the stage, in which there is not much that is either profane or vulgar. Probably you never passed one evening at a theatre without witnessing things which were highly indecorous, "and which, had they passed in a private family, you would have retired from with indignation, and considered your reputation as ruined by your return." Much that you there hear and see, is at direct war with delicate sensibility and every virtuous feeling. Could you, with any gentleman on earth, in your own drawing-room, read what is there rehearsed? Would you have reäcted, at your own house, what is there presented? Can you then with propriety allow yourself and your family to participate in those amusements abroad, which would disgrace and ruin the reputation of your own house? Examine the internal arrangements of the theatre, the character of the audience, and the ordinary, if not the necessary influence of what there transpires. You leave your home with your family, unsuspicious of danger. Seated in your box, can you read the character of those who are crowded around you? Allow that *they* are intelligent and virtuous. Look below into the pit, and the refuse of the city is swept to fill this reservoir of degradation. Look above you, and arrayed in all the fascinations of dress and beauty, are the profligate and abandoned of your own sex. In every corner of this immense edifice are presented new temptations to indulgence. In another apartment, both spacious and splendid, is stored every luxury, to gratify, stimulate, and fire the passions, already too much roused by the scenes of the stage. Here your sons may retire on the natural errand of procuring refreshments for yourself and daughters; and here, too, they may learn the first lessons of fatal indulgence, and be allured beyond the reach not only of safety, but of your remonstrance and your tears. Here are crowds, who meet to make their arrangements of guilt, and who, by the aid of stimulants, so mingled and poisoned as to arouse to a flame the most fatal passions,

seize and lead captive many a victim, who entered with unsullied innocence. Other departments of this frightful habitation I will not disclose; but if the testimony of those who know them best can be believed, they are enough to deter every virtuous female from ever placing her foot upon its threshold.

As to the society you here meet, you must acknowledge that it is not the most intelligent, virtuous, and refined. You are crowded with those who are already poisoned with vice, and with many who are already lost to every sense of shame. With the great mass whom you here meet, you would not be known under other circumstances to associate at all. Will you then train your family to such society? Will you expose them to influences which lie wholly beyond your control? Let me say to you, that multitudes are here prepared for the most gross and abandoned characters that infest our city; and that so well is this understood, that seats in the galleries of some theatres are free to the most abandoned of our race, and the keepers of dram-shops, of gambling-rooms, of assignation-houses and abodes of infamy, here resort, to mark and seize their victims, and from this nursery of death they are gathered in multitudes. Here many of our youth of either sex, and from the highest walks of life, have entered guileless and unsuspecting, but retired to sink in speedy disgrace and death. Shall your own sons and daughters be exposed yet to swell that melancholy number? Consider the influence of these scenes on the character and prospects of the *young generally*, many of whom have not the securities with which your family are furnished: nor can you fail to reflect that the time may soon come, when even yours may be deprived of a mother's watchfulness, and be left alone.

"Among the causes of vicious excitement in our city," says Professor Griscom of New York, "none appear to be so powerful in their nature as theatrical amusements. The number of boys and young men who have become determined thieves, in order to procure the means of introduction to the theatres and circuses, would appal the feelings of every virtuous mind, could the whole truth be laid open to the public. In the cases of the feebler sex the result is still worse. A relish for the amusements of the theatre, without the means of indulgence, becomes, too often, a mo-

tive for listening to the first suggestions of the seducer, and thus prepares for the haunts of infamy, and a total destitution of all that is valuable in the mind and character of women.

"During the progress," he adds, "of one of the most ferocious revolutions which ever shocked the face of heaven, theatres, in Paris alone, multiplied from six to twenty-five. One of two conclusions follows from this. Either the spirit of the times produced the institutions, or the institutions cherished the spirit of the times; and this will certainly prove that they are either the parents of vice or the offspring of it."

The infidel Rousseau declares, that the theatre is, in all cases, a school of vice. Sir John Hawkins, in his life of Johnson, says, "a playhouse and the regions about it are the very hotbeds of vice." Archbishop Tillotson declares the theatre a nursery of licentiousness and vice. Bishop Collier says, "that he was persuaded that nothing had done more to debauch the age in which he lived, than the stage-poets and the playhouse." And even Plato has declared that "plays raise the passions and pervert the use of them, and are of course dangerous to morality."

Let it not be argued that these amusements are securities against grosser immorality. They rather *prepare the way* for such immorality. They are to multitudes the very cause of gross, profane, and fatal habits, and the highway to infamy and death. There is not a man on earth, who understands the resources of the theatre and the results to which they lead, who will question for a moment the truth of this declaration. With all the innocence and purity ascribed to these amusements, they are linked to a chain of downward and deteriorating causes, while they never are to upward and more virtuous associations.

But you have *sons*, in whose prosperity you feel the deepest interest, and whose danger is peculiarly great. The customs of society impose restrictions on the female members of respectable families which young men do not feel. The hour arrives when the one class are handed to their homes, not indeed in the most favorable circumstances, but they retire perhaps to the wakeful solicitude of a mother's love, and it may be beneath the guardianship of a mother's prayer. But the other class are now left alone, to review

the events of the evening. They pass their commendations and their strictures, not always in the most chaste and becoming manner, for the nature of the subjects under review does not always admit it. Under the lassitude and exhaustion of past hours, they seek additional stimulants to refresh and invigorate. The night is far spent, the remainder of it is exhausted in feasting and in games, and a weary and diseased frame is dragged out to the employments of another day, or seeks repose to recruit its energies.

As the gay scene closes, a crowd of young men are thrown out upon the open bosom of our city, who have no homes to visit, no parents nor friends to watch over them; and with minds poorly fitted to retire to their solitary repose, they visit the brilliant retreats that blazon around the place of their recreation. Temptations are spread before them, and where mere curiosity first led their steps, hope of gain now binds them, and by the fatal influence of a solitary night, many are irrecoverably lost.

To others, the refreshing air of night will invite a walk from the concluded scenes of the theatre. They too, may have no guardians nor waiting friends to fear or regard. They soon hear the strains of that voluptuous music which never sleeps. Led by curiosity, the unsuspecting victim pauses at the brilliantly lighted habitation, while all is gayety within. He hears "of *peace-offerings from enticing lips*"—"*he goes as an ox to the slaughter—a dart strikes through his liver—this house is the way to hell, going down to the chambers of death.*" Oh, a million of youth, paid back to broken hearts, would not replace the sacrifice thus made in a single city.

My dear friend, those amusements in which you have indulged, and allowed your sons and daughters to indulge, do contribute powerfully to these tremendous evils, and from your endeared circle, a victim may yet be snatched—a just, yet melancholy sacrifice, to these your perilous indulgences. As a lady of fashionable life, and of influence, as one who respects morality, and who would, by no means, abandon the hope of future piety, will you not suspend this indulgence? For the safety, virtue, and salvation of your children, will you not do it? Can you ever retire again from these amusements, with your daughters, and not feel that your virtuous sensibilities have been endangered? Al-

low me to add, in the language of a distinguished gentleman, "It is amazing to think, that women who pretend to decency and reputation, whose brightest ornament ought to be modesty, should continue to abet, by their presence, so much unchastity as is to be found in the theatre." If this astonishment could be expressed fifty years ago, what ought to be the language of astonishment now? You live in a day when an experiment is making upon female delicacy and self-respect; and it is called, by the advocates of the theatre, a "*bold experiment.*" It is an experiment on your virtue and moral principle; and shall it be said, that there is not "shrinking delicacy" enough in your bosoms to repel and refute their boastings, "*that they have now nothing to fear?*" You may have frowned upon this rude encroachment, which has already been made upon your modesty and virtue; but that frown has not been followed by your continued absence, and you thus are giving encouragement to another and more daring experiment. If you, and the more respectable and virtuous females of our city and country will not withdraw from these polluting scenes, no one can calculate the degradation to which we are doomed; and you and they may yet be called to weep when tears will be unavailing; and the miserable wrecks of your endeared hopes may add keener anguish to your dying hours. You must die, and then you will not need the anticipations of an eternal state to harrow up your soul in view of precious seasons lost in folly and in sin. But there is, my friend, an *eternal state* of just and righteous retribution; and will you longer expose your soul, and the souls of your offspring, to its fatal issues? Tell me, I pray you, in view of death, judgment, and eternity, are these scenes longer to be loved? If there is not a remnant of anxiety for yourself remaining in your soul, will you lead, by the hand of parental influence, your beloved children to the gates of death? You will meet them in eternity; and Oh, calculate, if you can, an eternity of happiness lost to them and to you—an eternity of misery by them and you to be endured!

I am sincerely and affectionately your

FRIEND.

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No. 290.

THE

BOLD BLASPHEMER.

A NARRATIVE OF FACTS.

About thirty miles from the place in which for a number of years I resided, lived a respectable family, with whom I frequently tarried for a night, and became well acquainted. In that new country there are very few taverns except in towns, and at the house of Mr. W. L. I always received a hearty welcome. He was a frank, open-hearted, hospitable man, and though himself irreligious, was quick-sighted to discern consistency of character, and respected the man who was not ashamed of his religion. I had several times heard him mention that the overseer he had employed for a number of years was sick, and had gone to live nearer to a physician, and he often expressed his fears that "poor T. would not recover." His complaints were of such a nature as almost to preclude the hope.

I asked something about the character of the sick man; and in reply Mr. L. said, "He is the best manager I ever had, but he is the most wicked swearer I ever heard. Bad as I am myself, it chills my very blood to hear him. It seems to me his oaths must come from the lower regions, they are so wicked." I asked, "Does he not seem sensible that he has but a little time to live?" Mr. L. answered, "I told him last week that he did not seem to be getting any better, when he broke out in such a volley of curses, that I was almost afraid to stay in the house. He cursed his Maker for sending upon him such sufferings. He cursed the physicians for not curing him. He cursed me for telling him he would not get well. I never heard such profaneness. It was awful to hear him."

When J. T. found there was no hope of cure, he requested to be carried home to the house of his employer, and here I saw and heard this bold blasphemer. My first

interview was very brief, and he attempted no reply to the few words I addressed to him.

In the same neighborhood lived a humble Christian, whom this blasphemer had delighted to ridicule. As soon as good Mr. G. heard of J. T.'s return to the neighborhood, he took his Bible, and went over to see him. To the usual inquiry as to his health, he uttered a horrid oath, and said, "You see I am sick, what do you ask me for?" Mr. G. remarked, "Yes, I know you are sick, and I came over to sit a while and have some talk with you."

T. "Well, if you have any news to tell me, speak out; but don't say a word about your cursed religion. I hate it."

Mr. G. "Why do you hate religion?"

T. "I never saw any body made better by it."

G. "How is that? Look at James S——. Is he the same horse-racer, and fighter, and drunkard, he used to be? Is he none the better for his religion?"

T. "Perhaps he is; but there is H. W. over the river, he pretended to become a Christian, and there is not a greater cheat in the whole county of W."

G. "It is true he is a professor of religion, but it is to be feared from his conduct, that his heart is not right with God. But you don't throw away all your bank-notes because you get now and then a counterfeit. One of the best evidences of the excellency of the Christian religion is, that its enemies expect its professors to be good and holy men. True religion makes those who possess it good men, good husbands, and fathers, and masters. Now T., you know in your heart this is true."

T. "And you know if I was not sick I could outtalk you, and head you up, whichever road you took; but I am too sick to talk, and I don't care about hearing any more preaching."

G. "I make no question of your superior abilities; but I think God has made me a *happier* man than some I know."

T. "*I* am not a happy man, God knows."

G. "But I can tell what would make you happy."

T. "I know what you are going to say, but say on."

G. Opens his Bible and reads. "This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, of whom I am chief." "Be-

lieve on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved." "Repent ye, therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out." "He that, being often reproved, hardeneth his neck, shall suddenly be destroyed, and that without remedy." "Every one of us shall give account of *himself* to God."

Even these passages of Scripture, with the few remarks by which they were accompanied, were so offensive, that while the good man was yet speaking, T. summoned unwonted strength, crawled off his bed, and succeeded in reaching a bed in the adjoining room. Mr. G. was greatly affected, and after some appropriate conversation with Mrs. L. left the house.

The next evening a pious man, who stopped to spend the night, attempted to have some conversation with T., but finding it only irritated him, he desisted. His case was, however, particularly mentioned in family prayer; but it so enraged the sick man, that he seized a chair with the strength of a maniac, and struck his black boy who waited on him.

T.'s situation became every day more and more distressing. As he became conscious he could not live much longer, his hatred to God, to Christians, and to the Bible, increased in malignity. Mrs. L. told him, that so dreadful were his imprecations and curses, she was terrified continually, and feared some heavy judgment would be sent on the whole house. I saw him at this time, and can never forget his appearance. He was emaciated to a skeleton. His sharp black eye had an unnatural fierceness; his voice was deep and hollow. There was a haggardness in his looks, a restless impatience and anguish depicted in his face, such as I never saw before. I was journeying in company with a clergyman, and we stopped to spend the night with our hospitable friend, W. L. I knew our visit would be pleasant to Mrs. L., as she had recently indulged hope in Christ. I knew, too, that she was greatly distressed and worn out by the scene which was passing before her, and that a visit from my friend would be gratifying to her, as she had told me that his conversation on the importance of a preparation for death had been the means of leading her to the Saviour.

We entered the usual sitting-room, and here lay poor T.

He could not bear to be left alone, and at his urgent request he had been removed to this room, forgetting that he must go *alone* to try the realities of *eternity*—that he must go *alone* to the judgment-bar of the God he had so often blasphemed.

As soon as conversation could be introduced, my fellow-traveller inquired of T. as to the nature of his complaints, etc. He was very free to converse on this subject; the more so, probably, because he knew that Mr. W. had some medical knowledge. He related his symptoms, his sufferings, the various remedies used, etc., and finding he was listened to patiently, he seemed quite animated, possibly with the faint hope that something could yet be done for him. Mr. W. endeavored to draw from him whether he had any hope of recovery, and it appeared evident that if he had any, it was very feeble. In a very tender, but solemn manner, Mr. W. then spoke of the change which awaits all men, of the eternity to which all are hastening, of the judgment-seat before which all must stand, and of the final sentence from which there is no appeal, no escape.

We listened with breathless anxiety, and I trust more than one offered up fervent petitions that this poor sinner might awake to a sense of his danger. It was the first time that he had listened so long to any serious conversation without interrupting it. I perceived he was restless, and I had begun to indulge the hope that we should hear him exclaim, "Sirs, what must I do to be saved?" But, alas, when the question was asked, "Do you feel prepared to stand before the holy and just God, to whose eyes all things are naked and open?" he broke out, saying,

"I am as much prepared as I ever shall be; and if I am not, it is none of your business."

Fixing his eyes full upon him, Mr. W. said, "Young man, let me tell you, you may realize your situation yet before you die; you may wish in vain for the short time which appears to be now between you and eternity. You can live but a few days; it may be, but a few hours. God calls you *now* to *repent*. But if you *will not*, if you harden your heart and stiffen your neck, you *may call* when God will not hear, you may stretch out your hand when he will not regard, because you have set at naught all his counsel, and despised his reproof."

Mr. W. was asked to lead in family prayer; and here another opportunity offered, which was eagerly embraced, of reaching the case of the sick man. A suitable portion of Scripture was read, a solemn and affecting exhortation given, and then such a prayer offered as it seems to me I never united in before. I thought T. would be melted; but no, he was wroth—he tossed upon his bed—he rolled over—his eyes, Oh I can never forget their expression—he raised himself up—he tossed to one side of the bed and the other—he rose upon his feet—staggered to the door—was caught and seated in a chair in the entry till the prayer was over, and then brought back to his bed.

Nothing more was said to him that night. But it was to him a night of unspeakable horror—his groans we could distinctly hear, intermingled occasionally with shocking oaths. He was evidently afraid to sleep himself, and seemed determined that no one else should.

We took our leave early in the morning, when again a word was addressed to him. A week after, we heard that this bold blasphemer had gone to the eternal world. The circumstances of his death were related to me by Mr. and Mrs. L., and Mr. G.

Two nights after we left him, there was evidently a change for the worse, which he was the first to notice. He had an hour or two of disturbed sleep, and awoke in great distress both of body and mind, crying out, "I shall die; Oh I am dying, and shall go to hell."

Those around him tried to tell him about the Saviour of sinners, but he would not hear. He continued to exclaim, "I am lost—O, I am lost—I shall go to hell."

He requested Mr. W. to be sent for; but as it was thought he could not live through the night, and the distance was great, it was not judged best to send. He then requested old Mr. G. to be sent for. The old man soon came.

Mr. T. "O do pray for me, I must die, and go to hell."

Mr. G. "You must pray for yourself."

T. "I can't."

G. "You can say, 'God be merciful to me a sinner.'"

T. "O no I can't. God will not hear such a wretch."

G. "But *my prayers cannot save you;* you must pray for yourself; you must repent of sin. You must believe in

the Lord Jesus Christ; yield up yourself to him, and through his atoning blood all your sins shall be forgiven."

T. "O do pray—O do pray for me."

His request was complied with; but he continued his groans and exclamations, so that it is probable he heard but little of the prayer. When Mr. G. ceased, he begged him to read the Bible. This was done. If Mr. G. stopped, he would cry out, "do read," or "do pray," or "do talk."

Mr. G. fearing he was depending on him to save him, and knowing that he was rapidly going into eternity, left the house. He told me he could scarcely endure the moans and cries which this blasphemer uttered. They seemed not the cries of a penitent pleading for mercy, but of a soul suffering under God's wrath, and tasting the cup which his own folly and wickedness had mixed. He tossed upon his bed, lashed by the upbraidings of conscience, and there seemed to be realized in his case "a certain fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation" from his offended Creator.

He was often urged, during these hours of anguish, to *repent now*—to *pray now*. To which he invariably answered, "*I can't—'tis too late—too late—'tis too late for me.* Take warning by me, O take warning—*'tis too late for me.*" In this manner he continued to groan, and toss, and struggle, till nature was exhausted.

Thus died this bold blasphemer. And now where is he?

Reader, here is a simple narrative of facts. Many persons were acquainted with the man and the manner of his death. I often heard it talked about while I lived in that part of the country. I am sure that no one who saw him during the last week of his life can ever forget him. Often have I thought of his appearance, and my blood has chilled in my veins. Yet, hardened and wicked as he was, "his sin found him out." Even in this world he felt the gnawings "of the worm that never dies." He had a clear perception of what his sins deserved, and though he trembled and shrunk at the sight, yet no meltings of godly sorrow came over his soul. No change of posture gave ease to his tortured spirit. He had often prayed that God would damn his soul; but now he felt he *could not pray* that it might be *saved*. He had racked his invention to make the

most absurd and wicked oaths, and now he saw them returning upon his own soul, and ready to sink him to that world of woe from which he seemed to have borrowed language to express the wickedness of his heart.

"It is too late—too late for me," was his cry, when urged to repent—"*Too late—too late.*" "He knew his duty, but he did it not." He knew that he was a creature of God, who had a claim to his obedience. He knew that his laws were holy, just, and good, and that he had wilfully broken them, and incurred the penalty, "The soul that sinneth, it shall die."

Reader, is it yet "too late" for you? Are you still in your sins? Is it nothing to you that God your Maker claims your obedience and love? Is it nothing to you that the Redeemer has died, and that "he that believeth" in him "shall be saved, and he that believeth not shall be damned?"

Are you a profane swearer? "Be sure your sin will find you out." Have you ever prayed God to "*damn your soul?*" He has heard that prayer, and it may be, he will answer it according to your request. And now let me seriously ask you, can you calmly repeat the impious prayer you have so often uttered? *Can you do it? Dare you do it?* Are you so hardened in sin that you can deliberately pray for "*damnation?*"

Think, what is it to be damned—to be cast off from God, from happiness, from heaven, and cast down to hell, the prison of despair? Think, too, that this will be eternal. God hath said, "The wicked shall go away into *everlasting punishment*, where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched."

Do you plead as an excuse for swearing, that you do it *thoughtlessly*, that you have acquired the *habit*, and now you hardly know when you swear? This is a dreadful acknowledgment that you so constantly break the command, "Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain," that it has become habitual. You thus acknowledge that you care not for the command, and defy the penalty.

Do you say that you only swear when you are *in a passion?* Do you offer this as an *excuse?* Will you carry up this excuse to the judgment of the great God, before

whom you must answer for "every idle word?" Will you tell *him* that you broke his commands thoughtlessly, habitually, and when you were in a passion; or do you hope to escape the notice of Omniscience? Think not that in that immense assembly, when all who have lived shall stand before the Judge, you may be overlooked or passed by unobserved. O no. He who numbers the hairs of your head; whose eyes, as a flame of fire, have been fixed upon you during all your wayward course; who has often warned you by his providence, his ministers, his Spirit, and by your own conscience; who has borne with you patiently, it may be twenty, thirty, or fifty years; he will not let you escape. The mountains will not heed your call, nor will the hills cover you "from the face of Him that sitteth on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb."

Now, fellow-sinner, what will you do? Conscience whispers that you are verily guilty. What then will you do? Come to a decision. Will you continue this *senseless, absurd, wicked* practice of *swearing;* or will you break off from *this,* and *all other sins,* and lead a life of obedience to *all the commands* of *your Maker?* Will you throw aside this Tract, which pleads with you, as a man with his friend, to think of these things as you will wish you had done when you come to die? Will you deliberately crowd these considerations out of mind, and pursue the same downward course? Will you, when your eternal all is at stake, throw away your soul? Throw it away! Where? Into the cold, dark, cheerless gulf of annihilation? This you cannot do. You cannot cease to exist. O no. If you repent not, you wilfully throw your soul into that boundless, unfathomable abyss where no sound is heard save "weeping, and wailing, and gnashing of teeth for ever."

*** The facts in the above narrative are fully substantiated to the Committee of the American Tract Society.

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No. 291.

THE

HORRORS OF HEATHENISM.

THE object of these pages is to present the moral condition of the heathen, and the motives for sending them the glorious Gospel. The facts are from the most authentic sources, chiefly from eye-witnesses; and the subject is presented with the devout hope, that such compassion for the miserable and perishing may be awakened as will rouse to ardent prayer and more active benevolence.

I. EXTENT OF HEATHENISM.

More than half the earth's surface is covered with moral darkness. Almost the whole of the vast regions of Asia and of Africa, extensive portions of North and South Amer-

ica, together with numerous islands of the sea, belong to the empire of paganism. In its deplorable darkness are enveloped, according to the best authority, not less than five hundred millions of the human race; and these regions embrace many of the fairest portions of the globe. Nature is nowhere seen in more lovely attire, and has been nowhere more lavish of her bounties. In grandeur and beauty of scenery, in fertility of soil, in variety of useful productions, they are exceeded by none on earth. Let the eye of Christian benevolence run to and fro through this immense empire of darkness. Truly the harvest is great.

II. ABSURDITIES OF HEATHENISM IN RESPECT TO THE DEITY AND DIVINE WORSHIP.

1. *Objects of worship.* More than two hundred millions of our race, embracing China and contiguous countries, are Buddhists, worshipping a great variety of imaginary deities, paying homage to the spirits of departed ancestors, and to innumerable idols. More than fifty millions are worshippers of the Grand Lama, a deified human being. More than one hundred millions, including Hindostan and regions adjacent, are worshippers of the deity under three forms, Brahma, Vishnu, and Siva, with numberless subordinate deities. The millions inhabiting the various Asiatic and Pacific islands worship an endless variety of false gods, represented by images in every variety of monstrous and disgusting forms. In different pagan nations various animals receive divine honors, as the cow in India, various reptiles in South Africa, the shark among the natives of the Pacific isles, and the crow among natives of the North-west coast. The luminaries of heaven are also deified, as are rivers, and trees, and departed souls of men, and malignant demons.

2. *Their religious rites evince the greatest degradation.* In some regions they are attended with excessive *cruelties.* "The shark," says Rev. Mr. Ellis, "was formerly worshipped in the South Sea islands. On the occasion of worship, the priests sallied forth, and wherever a company of per-

sons were assembled, a rope with a noose was suddenly and unexpectedly thrown among them, and the first person taken in the snare, man, woman, or child, was strangled, cut in pieces, and thrown into the sea, to be devoured by the shark."

Dr. Buchanan writes, "The horrid solemnities of Juggernaut continue. Yesterday a woman devoted herself to the idol. The wheel did not kill her instantaneously, as is generally the case, but she died in a few hours. This morning, as I passed 'the place of skulls,' nothing remained but her bones."

Religious rites in some regions are most disgusting. "The car of the chief Hindoo idol," says Dr. Buchanan, "moved on a little way and then stopped. A boy of about twelve years was then brought forth to attempt something yet more lascivious, if peradventure the god would move. The child perfected the praise of his idol with such ardent expression and gesture that the god was pleased, and the multitude emitting a sensual yell of delight, urged the car along." The Hindoo gods are represented as examples of every kind of licentiousness, and as pleased with correspondent rites of worship. Their images and the sculpture of their temples are spectacles of impurity. The whole idol system exerts a most debasing and demoralizing influence upon the mind. What a contrast between paganism and revelation on the grand point, the character of God and the way of acceptance with him!

III. THE HEATHEN HAVE NO CORRECT VIEWS OF A FUTURE STATE.

This is another affecting feature of their moral degradation. The Chinese and the Hindoos—and theirs is the faith of more than half the heathen world—believe in the *transmigration of the soul*, or its passage after death from the present body to some other; the good to nobler, the bad to viler bodies. These views involve a mere animal existence after death, and rewards and punishments corresponding to such an existence. Various African and Indian tribes

suppose the future state a sort of continuance of the present, involving similar wants, and perils, and circumstances. Accordingly the grave of the Indian receives also his dress, arms, etc. Retribution to the good will consist of cloudless skies, unfailing verdure, and abundant game, with all the luxuries of sensual appetite; while the wicked are to endure all the torments of ungratified desire in barren lands, abounding with wild beasts and venomous serpents, and darkened with storms and tempests. Without greater particularity on this subject, it may suffice to say, that while we find no pagan nation destitute of some idea of a future state, we find none whose views are not mingled with extravagant absurdities. While they have been unable to resist the impression of a future life, they have given to a corrupt and disordered fancy the privilege of drawing such a picture as she pleased.

In respect to *character*, moral debasement is the universal tendency of heathen views of futurity. An anticipated sensual paradise countenances the baser appetites, while the fierce and malignant passions are inflamed by the supposed future rewards of success in war or schemes of revenge. Instead of awing the transgressor's mind and repressing evil deeds, the reverse is the melancholy fact. And on *happiness* their influence is no less disastrous. By bloody sacrifices of human victims, by unbounded indulgence of hateful lusts and malignant passions, countenanced and encouraged as these are by absurd views of a future world, the sum of human misery has been vastly increased. How beneficent the hand that bestows that Gospel which brings "life and immortality to light," which sets truly before the benighted pagan's mind the things that shall be hereafter!

IV. VICE AND CRIME AMONG THE HEATHEN.

Under the influence of polluting and debasing views of the Deity and divine worship, of incorrect apprehensions of a future world, and the grinding oppression of despotic rulers, iniquity bursts forth in heathen countries in prodig-

ious luxuriance. Our limits forbid a survey of the great sea of pagan wickedness. The united voice of all who have dwelt among the heathen proclaims, that none but those actually present to behold them can have any idea of what revolting scenes of depravity are every day witnessed. Those upon the spot declare, that the awful picture of heathen abominations, drawn in the first chapter of Romans, is essentially the state of heathenism as developed before their eyes. Vice bursts over all control, and rolls its waves of corruption on every side. The whole idol system, all over the earth, is full of abominations: it carries its deluded victims down to such a frightful depth of shameless pollution as renders details too revolting to be endured.

V. THE MISERIES OF THE HEATHEN ARE VERY GREAT.

1. *Despotic governments* produce incalculable misery. The arm of oppression often strips men in an hour of the gains of years, thus plunging families, sometimes whole districts, into the depths of poverty and misery. Capricious and sanguinary laws stretch the rod of terror over the enslaved and trembling subject. Property, liberty, or life, must be surrendered at the caprice of a tyrant.

2. *Religious customs* inflict great miseries. It has ever been a favorite pagan notion, that suffering was pleasing to the Deity. This is often voluntary, inflicted by deluded devotees upon themselves. The flesh is cut or pierced with sharp instruments, tortured by fire, or emaciated by abstinence from food. A most miserable death is often the consequence of this infatuation. Some cast themselves upon iron spikes, which inflict deadly wounds; others bury themselves alive in the earth; others sink themselves with heavy stones to the bottom of the ocean; others throw themselves beneath the wheels of idol cars. The funeral pile in India was a dreadful specimen of self-inflicted misery.

"In the year 1799, twenty-two females," says the London Christian Observer, "were burnt alive with the dead body of Unutio, a Brahmin. The fire was kept burning

three days. When one or more arrived, the ceremonies were gone through with, and they threw themselves upon the blazing fire! On the first day three were burned; on the second and third days *nineteen* more." "Another Brahmin died near Serampore, who had married forty women; all but eighteen had died before him. On this occasion a fire extending ten or twelve yards in length was prepared, into which the remaining eighteen threw themselves, leaving more than forty children." In the Bengal presidency in nine years, from 1815 to 1824, the number of *suttees* (cases of burning as above) was 5,997.

The sufferings by *pilgrimages* in India are immense. More than 300,000 persons have been known to visit a favorite idol in a single year. By disease and want a frightful havoc of life is occasioned. The London Missionary Register gives the following facts from an eye-witness: "The poor pilgrims are to be seen in every direction dead, or in the agonies of death; lying by fives, tens, and twenties; and in some parts there were hundreds to be seen in one place." "I saw one poor creature who was partly eaten, though alive; the crows made an incision in the back, and were pulling at the wound when I came up. The poor creature feeling the torment, moved his head and shoulders for a moment; the birds flew up, but immediately returned and recommenced their meal."

3. Their miseries are multiplied by the *want of natural affection*. This principle is weakened, and it seems in some cases totally destroyed. The infirmities of declining life, instead of being soothed by filial tenderness, are the occasion of cruel abandonment, or death is hastened by bloody weapons. "Sometimes," says Rev. Mr. Ellis, "the South Sea native, tired of waiting on him, would pierce his aged and unsuspecting father with a spear. Sometimes the children would pretend they were carrying their father to bathe, when they would throw him into a grave previously prepared, stifle his cries, and put an end to his life by throwing large stones upon him."

"*Infanticide* has prevailed in almost every heathen country. "Hundreds of helpless children," says Mr. Kingsbury, "have been murdered among the Choctaws. Sometimes the mother digs a grave and buries her child alive as soon as it is born; sometimes she puts it to death by stamping on its breast, by strangling, or knocking it on the head."

"A Hindoo woman cast her child, between three and four years old, into the Ganges, as an offering to the goddess. The little creature made its way to a raft of bamboos that happened to be floating by, and seizing one end of it was drifted along, crying to its unnatural parent for help. She perceiving from the shore the danger of the child's escaping, plunged into the water, tore away its hold, broke its neck, and hurled its life-warm corpse into the middle of the current, by which it was soon drifted out of sight." Tyerman and Bennett's Journal.

4. *Heathen wars are cruel.* War is horrid enough under all the mitigations of civilized life, but in pagan lands it is carried on with terrible ferocity. Scarcely could unchained demons, bursting from their abodes beneath, make more horrid exhibitions of malignant passions. "The barbarity of wars in the South Sea islands," says Rev. Mr. Ellis, "was dreadful. Here a warrior might be seen tossing little children and infants into the air, and catching them upon the point of his spear, where they expired in agonies. There another might be seen dragging in savage triumph five or six lifeless children by a cord, which had been passed successively through their heads from ear to ear. Yonder, all covered with gore, another might be seen scooping with his hands the blood from the gushing trunk of his decapitated foe, and drinking it with hideous exultation."

5. Their sorrows are multiplied by *indifference to each other's woes.* The most hard-hearted selfishness is generated by heathenism. The sick languish unattended; the poor perish by cruel neglect, or direct acts of inhumanity. "As we passed, we saw a poor man lying dead among the heaps of grain. He had just picked up a few husks of peas

and grain, which it appears he had been attempting to eat, but was too far gone. Not a single man in the market would give this poor creature one handful of wheat to save his life." Christian Observer.

"Every Hindoo," says Dr. Ward, "in the hour of death is hurried to the side of the Ganges, or some sacred river, where he is exposed to the burning sun by day and the dews and cold by night. Just before the soul quits the body he is immersed to the middle in the stream, while his relations stand around him tormenting him in these last moments with superstitious rites, and increasing an hundred fold the pains of dying. Very often when recovery might be hoped for, these barbarous rites bring on premature death."

6. *Sense of insecurity* is a great source of misery. Every thing dear in the present world, friends, property, liberty, and life, are in constant jeopardy from the rapacity of despots. The storm may burst at any moment, taking every thing dear at a single stroke, or repeat its visit, emptying the vials of wrath, drop by drop. The effects of superstition in this respect, especially in Africa, are appalling. "When one of the royal family dies, human blood must flow as an offering to the gods. On these occasions the princes rush out, seize the first person they meet, and drag him in for sacrifice. While this season lasts, therefore, it is with trembling steps that any one crosses his threshold; and when compelled to do so, he rushes along with the utmost speed, avoiding every moment the murderous grasp that would consign him to death." Discoveries and Adventures in Africa.

7. *Unrestrained indulgence of the passions* multiplies the woes of the heathen. The horrid passion of revenge has turned into an utter desolation rich and populous provinces. Disease, the curse of unbridled lust, had made the most dreadful havoc on several of the South Sea islands when they were first visited by missionaries. Intemperance, an importation from Christian countries, has frightfully aug-

mented pagan wretchedness. Envy, and jealousy, and malice, and remorseless covetousness, contribute also to swell the tide which sends its bitter waters through a large portion of the scenes of social and domestic life.

8. *The miseries of females.* Humanity weeps at the melancholy picture of their degradation and wretchedness. "I would to God," said a South American Indian mother, "that my mother by my death had prevented the distresses I endure. What kindness can we show to our female children equal to that of relieving them by death from such oppression, a thousand times more bitter than death? I say again, would to God my mother had put me under ground the moment I was born." Cecil's Miss. Sermon.

"Hindoo females," says the Abbe Dubois, "*are in fact* used as mere animals. The men regard them as slaves, and treat them on all occasions with severity and contempt. The object for which an Hindoo marries is not to gain a companion to aid him in enduring the ills of life, but a slave to bear children and be subservient to his rule."

"The Chinese peasant," says Malte Brun, "yokes his wife and his ass together to his plough." And Mrs. Judson writes, "So far from receiving those delicate attentions which render happy the conjugal state, and which distinguish civilized from heathen countries, the wife receives the appellation, *my servant*, or *my dog*, and is allowed to partake of what her lordly brutal husband is pleased to give her at the conclusion of his own repast."

9. *Savage customs.* The system of caste in India is one of the greatest scourges which ever afflicted human nature. It is repugnant to every feeling of justice and humanity, and binds a most grievous burden upon millions of the human family. The taboo system of the Pacific islands was a kindred work of darkness, inflicting a cruel death upon all that broke its absurd enactments. The system of ordeals, or trials of accused persons by fire, water, poison, exposure to wild beasts, etc., is a perfect mockery of justice, and a vast arena of cruelty and misery.

10. *Anxieties and forebodings respecting a future state.* The vices and crimes of the heathen are so many and so odious, and so contrary to reason and conscience, the law written on their hearts so destructive to the body and polluting to the mind, and their modes of appeasing the Deity so utterly and manifestly absurd, that there cannot but be apprehensions for the future. It is said of the natives of the South Sea islands, that in their dying agonies they would often cry to their attendants, "There, there stand the demons watching for my spirit! O guard its exit; O preserve it from their grasp!" We cannot doubt that there are painful forebodings in the minds of millions as they contemplate the unknown future; these are whisperings of an immortality; there is conscious guilt, there is consequently anxiety and alarm.

"Their sorrows shall be multiplied that hasten after another god." We have given a mere outline, a drop or two of a great ocean. The cry of heathen degradation and wretchedness is an "exceeding bitter cry;" it is like the voice of many waters; it calls for the alleviating influence of that Gospel whose inviting voice is, "Come unto me, all ye that *labor and are heavy laden,* and I will give you rest."

VI. PROSPECTS OF THE HEATHEN FOR ETERNITY.

1. Throughout the Old Testament the character of the heathen is described as excessively wicked and most deeply offensive to God. He reproves them in the severest language. He warns his people, in every form of solemn admonition, against following their examples, and punishes them with severity when they imitate the heathen. He chastises pagan nations in the most terrible manner, assigning their wickedness as the reason. Witness the utter desolation of Sodom, Babylon, Tyre, Edom, and Moab. These terrible facts show that God views heathen abominations as inexcusable. They carried their pollutions with them to the grave, dying as they lived, leaving not a shadow of reason for believing their moral characters altered, and conse-

quently giving melancholy assurance of their having no part "in the resurrection of the just."

2. The New Testament describes in the plainest language the character of those who cannot enter the kingdom of heaven. The vices which involve this exclusion are such as these: "Idolatry, uncleanness, lasciviousness, hatred, envyings, wrath, malice, strife, seditions, covetousness, drunkenness, murders, revellings," etc. Those exposed to eternal wrath are also designated as "covenant-breakers, inventors of evil things, without natural affection, implacable, unmerciful, whose throat is an open sepulchre, under whose tongues is the poison of asps, whose mouth is full of cursing and bitterness, whose feet are swift to shed blood, who have no fear of God before their eyes." All testimony respecting the heathen proclaims that they live and die in just the moral condition here described. They do just such things, and have pleasure in them that do them. The inference is, that they inherit "that wrath which is revealed from heaven."

3. But we have *express declarations* upon this point. "But unto them that are contentious, and do not obey the truth, but obey unrighteousness, indignation and wrath, tribulation and anguish, upon every soul of man that doeth evil; of the Jew first, and *also of the Gentile.*" Romans 2 : 8, 9. Thus the heathen are as certainly exposed to perdition as any other class of sinners; no exception is made in their favor. Moral character is the ground upon which destiny is settled, and a miserable retribution will follow guilt wherever found. Again, "For as many as have sinned without law," that is, without knowledge of revelation, "shall *perish* without law," Romans 2 : 12—not by being judged by the requirements of revelation, but for not following the light they did enjoy. Nothing can be plainer than that the heathen may sin unto perdition, though unenlightened by revelation.

4. Upon no principle but the one now advocated can we account for the *conduct of the apostles towards the heathen.* Their earnest warnings, made "day and night with tears," their agonizing prayers, their cheerful endurance of every

species of reproach and suffering while preaching to the heathen, their renunciation of every temporal advantage, and their cheerful surrender of life to any horrid form of death, rather than abandon their work—all this is plain and consistent on the supposition of wrath to come, and inconsistent and inexplicable on any other. They were men full of the Holy Ghost. The certainty of sure perdition to impenitent heathen accounts for their conduct. They acted like madmen on any other principle.

5. The position now taken is confirmed by a scriptural view of the *character of God*, and the *nature of the heavenly world*. God is glorious in holiness, and the character, employments, and pleasures of the heavenly inhabitants are represented as at the farthest possible distance from every thing that defileth. With such a God, and in such a heaven, can such persons dwell as the Bible describes the heathen to be, and as we know them to be? Can the idolater, the reveller, the effeminate, the adulterer, the implacable, the unmerciful enter there? But this is the character of the heathen; they carry their abominations to their dying beds, and sink in death with all their pollutions upon them. Do not the heathen, then, "awake to shame and everlasting contempt?" If life, to probation's last hour, be spent in guilt and pollution, can we believe it will be succeeded by a happy immortality?

To the apology, that they worship God according to the best of their knowledge, and are therefore in no danger of perdition, I reply,

1. The word of God expressly denies this alleged ignorance, declaring that the works of nature display such evidences of the being and attributes of God, that there is no palliation of the guilt of idol worship. "For the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly *seen*, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead; so that they are without *excuse:* because that when they *knew* God, they glorified him not as God," etc. Rom. 1 : 20, 21. "Who, *knowing*

the judgment of God, that they which commit such things are *worthy of death*, not only do the same, but have pleasure in them that do them." Rom. 1 : 32. The works of nature pour as much light now upon pagan minds respecting the character and will of God as they did when these passages were written, and the inference of their inexcusableness is as just now as it was then.

2. But *facts* show their apology has no ground. Twilight is not noonday, but it may, nevertheless, be sufficient to show which is the right and which the wrong path. The leading principles of the moral law have never yet been entirely effaced amid all the darkness and depravity of the world. "At a very early age I was employed," confesses a distinguished pagan, "by my father to perform various offices in an idol temple. I hardly remember the time when my mind was not exercised on the folly of idolatry. These idols, I thought, were made only by the hand of man, can move from one place to another only by man, and, whether treated well or ill, are unconscious of either. So affected was I once by these considerations, that, instead of placing the idols according to custom, I threw them from their pedestals and left them with their faces in the dust." Missionary Register.

It cannot be doubted that in the minds of millions there is more or less conviction of their folly and wickedness; but as their religious systems give full sway to those passions whose indulgence constitutes their chief happiness, they willingly stifle conviction, and permit themselves to be borne away by the current.

It is no position of ours, that *no pagan* ever gropes his way to God. At the same time, with Scripture principles before us on the one hand, and the character of the heathen on the other, the conviction cannot be resisted, that the great body of them "go away into everlasting punishment."

Let there be no misapprehension on another point. They do not perish for rejecting Christ. How shall they reject one of whom they have never heard? They are condemned

for not following the light they do enjoy. Their voluntary wickedness, their utter moral unfitness for heaven, and that alone, is the ground of their exclusion.

If any thing can be proved from the word of God, it can be proved that the great body of the heathen are not saved. This is indeed a startling and awful conclusion; but it cannot be avoided. And it would seem that, in view of such facts, all Christendom would be filled with the deepest compassion; that throughout all its coasts would be heard the cry, Let us hasten to the perishing nations with that glorious Gospel which is the "wisdom of God and the power of God unto salvation."

VII. MOTIVES FOR SENDING THE GOSPEL TO THE HEATHEN.

1. *The Gospel is the grand and only remedy for their wants.* It meets them all. It is "a light to lighten the Gentiles." It reveals the true character of Jehovah, unfolds the way of acceptance through a Mediator, communicates all the great truths respecting a coming world needful for man to know, explains and enforces the duties of man in the present life, and moreover is accompanied, wherever it is proclaimed, by those gracious influences of the Holy Ghost by which men are "born again," "pass from death unto life," are filled with the love of God, are taught to deny every worldly lust, to lead lives of humility, meekness, patience, and active benevolence, and by which they are qualified for a holy and happy immortality. And the Gospel is the only means by which these glorious results can be accomplished. Its Author's name is the only one under heaven given among men, whereby they can be saved. The Gospel is the light of life; therefore are we bound to send it to every benighted region.

2. *The triumphs it has already won urge its universal diffusion.* Within thirty years it has driven idolatry from more than twenty islands of the sea. "It has so tamed the ferocity of numerous savage tribes, that they have beat their swords into ploughshares, and their spears into pruning-

hooks. It has broken in pieces some of the most iron-hearted despotisms that have ever scourged our race. It has erected hundreds of temples to the living God, and from them is now pouring on the surrounding darkness the glorious light of truth. It has raised whole communities from the most disgusting, brutal, and miserable degradation, to intelligence, sobriety, social order, and domestic happiness. It has exerted its sanctifying power over thousands, inspiring hatred of sin and the love and practice of holiness. It has furnished the miserable with precious consolations, and the dying with triumphant hopes." Labor, therefore, has not been spent for naught. Here is a loud appeal to scatter the good seed with an unsparing hand. The moral artillery of the Gospel has never been faithfully used without a triumph. Let the sound thereof go out to the ends of the world. Let it peal on every human ear.

3. *The facilities with which we are furnished for prosecuting this work, urge us forward.* No age has enjoyed so many. Christian enterprise has already lighted the lamp of life on the borders of the principal heathen kingdoms. From these positions light may be sent in every direction through the surrounding darkness. The benevolent heart can make its choice in what region of the shadow of death it would diffuse the glad tidings. By a thousand channels we can pour the waters of salvation on dry and thirsty lands. And in such arrangements of Providence is found the earnest remonstrance, "Why stand ye here all the day idle?"

4. *The present attitude of the pagan world powerfully appeals to us on their behalf.* The long slumbers of moral death begin to be broken. As here and there a ray of light has penetrated the thick darkness, the spirit of inquiry has been roused. The superstitions of an hundred generations are shaken. They seem sinking under the mighty mass of their own corruptions. The mind, so long debased and benighted, as if the burden could be endured no longer, is looking round for some supply of its immortal wants. The glimmerings of the true light have shown the heathen the

frightful reality of their own degradation and wretchedness. "Come over and help us," is the cry which is waxing louder and louder from different regions of the pagan world. How affecting the spectacle of benighted nations asking for the bread of life! Who can withstand such an appeal? A most solemn responsibility rests upon those who hear it. A motive to exertion is thus presented which cannot be resisted without deep guilt. Whose heart can refuse the fervent prayer; whose hand deny the generous offering?

5. I urge one more motive, and it is an imperative one, the *last command of our Lord Jesus Christ.* He knew the darkness, the pollutions, the miseries, and the dangers of the heathen. He knew his Gospel was their only remedy. He knew, too, all the objections which enmity, unbelief, covetousness, or lukewarmness could make to its diffusion. But he makes no reservation. "Go, preach the Gospel to every creature." Traverse every sea; penetrate every benighted island and continent; preach it in every language; let every creature hear its glad tidings. No evasion is possible; none can be made which would not justify violation of any other divine precept. There stands the imperative injunction before the eyes of all Christians; uttered last, that it might be remembered longest; uttered as the closing act of the Saviour's mission on earth, that nothing should be wanting to its solemnity. And that precept does bind, if divine authority can impose obligation, it does bind those who have the Gospel, to send it through the world.

Reader, the claims of the heathen are before you. You cannot now refuse them the aid Providence enables you to give, and be guiltless of their blood. If you harden your heart under the affecting appeals of pagan miseries, "Doth not he that pondereth the heart consider it; and he that keepeth thy soul, doth not he know it?" Surrender your mind to the influence of Christian benevolence. By fervent prayer, by every needed sacrifice of time, and property, and influence, bear your part in the blessed enterprise of pouring the light of salvation on a benighted world.

ARE YOU READY?

"*What do you mean by this question?*" There is a great event before you: its arrival is certain; but it is utterly beyond your power to ascertain at what hour it will arrive. Ten or twenty years may elapse before its arrival—perhaps not as many minutes. Some have expected it long, but it still delays. Millions have put it far off, but it has burst unexpectedly upon them. This is a most momentous event. It will sunder all your relations to the present world: it will break every tie of mortality—strip off every disguise—expose every error and deception—bring out to light your whole character, even to every secret thing—present you before a just and holy Judge, and introduce you to an unchangeable condition of joy or sorrow. This event is DEATH; and the question is, are you ready to die?"

"*Who asks this question?*" Your *Maker*. He does it in his *word*. One of the grand objects of that blessed volume is to enable you to give it an affirmative answer. By judgments and by mercies does his holy *providence* press this matter upon you. Your own *rational nature* does the same. When reason and conscience are permitted to speak, they urge attention to this great concern. Dispel from your mind the delusive charms of this world; press your way out of that torrent of cares or pleasures which sweeps every serious thought away; rebuke every other appeal, and let that only be heard which the unblinded reason and the unseared conscience make, and you will perceive that this inquiry is solemnly addressed to you. By your *frailty* and *mortality* is this question pressed. Nothing can be more precarious than your hold on life. Your body is the tie that binds you to the earth. How frail a flower! "The wind passeth over it, and it is gone." It is in health and

vigor to-day; to-morrow it is lifeless and cold, and full of corruption. "The worm is thy sister and thy mother." Your frailty therefore cries, *Are you ready?* and the voice waxes louder and louder with every wasting hour of your probation. *Eternity* seems uttering the same appeal: as if with a living voice, it presses every human mind with the momentous truth, that beyond the grave man's destiny is irreversibly settled; the righteous are "righteous still," the filthy, "filthy still." And it utters the earnest admonition, "Beware of unpreparedness to die." But there is yet another voice—and, reader, if there be any voice that should drown all the appeals of the cares and pleasures of this world—which should excite the soul's most intense and devout attention—which should penetrate its lowest depths, and arouse its strongest emotions—it should be the voice of *the Redeemer.* "Be ye also ready," is his admonition. No voice breaks upon human ears in so much tenderness and love; for no friendship has man experienced like that shown him by the Son of God, and no voice is so suited to inspire solemnity and awe as that of the final Judge.

"*Why ask* THIS *question?*" Because none can be conceived of so much importance. Because, disturbing men's sinful minds as it does, they are not disposed to press it honestly and earnestly upon themselves. Because an honest, serious, enlightened decision of this question may be of everlasting benefit to your soul. Because, amid the hurry of business or the whirl of pleasure, you may at this hour need something to lead you to consider your character and eternal prospects. Because, if the subject which this question urges upon you is not attended to, the soul will be lost.

"*Why ask* ME *this question?*" Because it respects interests of *yours* of infinite value—interests in fearful peril, if you cannot answer this question in the affirmative. Because this question is suited to arouse attention to what *you* may have totally neglected. Because *you* may be the very person of all living who most needs such an appeal; being, perhaps, the victim of a false hope, or of fatal error, and borne farther and farther every day from God by the grow-

ing power of sin. Because it is of infinite importance that *you* make a correct decision of this question. And especially, because the next bosom pierced by the dart of death may be *your own!*

"*Who are not ready?*" Common opinion, in a Gospel land, sweeps a large circle, and there stand within it the murderer, the thief, the drunkard, the idolater, the profane swearer, the adulterer, the scoffer, the liar, and the hypocrite. But the word of God sweeps a larger circle still, including not only *those*, but *these:* the covetous, the lewd, the lovers of pleasure more than of God, the fraudulent, the unmerciful, the formalist, the prayerless, the worldly—indeed every soul which has not been washed in the blood of Christ, and is not an habitation of the Holy Spirit. Not one of all these can give an affirmative answer to the question now urged. Not one of them is ready to die. Death's arrival, if they understood their own condition, would fill them with inexpressible consternation.

"*If I am ready—what then?*" As this is one of the most important decisions mortal man can make—as it involves interests of infinite value—as a wrong decision would be unspeakably perilous—make it not without the most careful examination. Spread before you the Holy Scriptures, and ponder deeply their descriptions of Christian character. Apply the line and plummet to your own heart and life. Rest on no man's good opinion. Keep in mind the final trial of your case. How solemn, how searching that trial! How momentous the result! If, after all, you can humbly hope you are accepted in Christ, then honor with the warmest zeal, and in every possible manner, the Author and Finisher of your faith. Let all men see that your hope purifies, and your faith works by love. Let them see that your whole character has been cast anew in the mould of the Gospel. By every energy you can employ, endeavor to make your fellow-men possessors of a like glorious hope.

"*If I am not ready—what then?*" Then you have already run a most desperate hazard of losing your soul. You could not have said, in any hour of life, the next should

not be your last; and as you are now unprepared to die, you have run as many risks of everlasting ruin as you have lived hours. You have stood on the dizzy height of a most frightful precipice! Your feet had well nigh slipped! Look back: it would seem your heart would grow faint and sick at the dreadful peril to which you have been exposed. Your not being now ready also implies very great guilt. It implies insensibility to the most powerful and affecting motives; stubborn refusal of a thousand kind and affectionate invitations; contempt of most solemn warnings; reckless indifference to the soul's value. I appeal not to vices and crimes in proof of sin; there is evidence enough without this to prove you stained with crimson guilt. But if you are not ready, there is no work so important, no obligation so pressing, as your immediately seeking the favor of God. Bid the world retire. Its highest and most pressing claims should not impede you for a moment in the great work of getting ready to die.

"*But I am in health, in the fulness of my strength, why press this matter so earnestly upon* ME?" You are just the person to be addressed. If you lay upon a dying bed, life's lamp expiring, and all your powers sinking into ruin; if you had reached such a point unprepared, had crowded this great work into that most unfit hour, there would be scarce the slightest prospect that any appeal would avail.

Once more. The question, *Are you ready?* though now asked in affectionate earnestness, will not be asked by that unrelenting destroyer, DEATH. He asks no man if he is ready. He drives his dart alike through the ready and the reluctant soul. Furnished or unfurnished for the world to come, it must obey the dreadful summons. Reader, by all that is blessed in a death of peace and hope, be entreated to regard the solemn expostulation of your Lord: "*Be ye also ready; for in such an hour as you think not, the Son of man cometh.*"

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No. 293.

ELIZA,

THE CHIPPEWAY INDIAN.

MISSION STATION AT MACKINAW.

It was in the autumn of 1823 that I met a little Indian boy on the island of Mackinaw, and accompanying him home to gain permission of his mother to bring him into the mission school, I first saw the then wretched woman who forms the subject of this narrative. She was about forty-five years old. Her Indian name was *O-dah-be-tuh-ghe-zhe-go-quai*, signifying, in English, the Midway-sky-woman, or the place of the sun at noon. She was born about three hundred miles up the south shore of lake Superior, and was by blood of the Chippeway tribe.

Her uncle being a chief, she was chosen, in early life, to become interpreter of dreams. The qualifications for this honor were to be decided by living ten days in a separate hut, without any other nourishment than a little water each night. She faithfully observed the prescribed abstinence, although it nearly cost her life, and of her own

accord afterwards fasted nine days more. From this time she was considered an extraordinary being. The tribe would not permit her to work, but provided her with a wigwam of distinction, and she constantly received from them the best of their food and clothing. She was also furnished with a large otter skin, or medicine sack, stored with every article thought to be necessary either for the magical cure of the sick, or for interpreting dreams. This sack, which she carefully preserved, was her badge of honor; and in all their medicine dances she was greatest among the great. On these occasions she took the lead in drinking whiskey, till she became excessively intemperate, and by the neglect of the Indians and the death of three of her children, she was reduced to a state of seclusion and poverty.

She was thus living when I found her little boy and accompanied him to her lodge. A wretchedly destitute and miserable scene we witnessed. At that time no persuasion could induce her to allow her son to join the mission school. But going the second time, and the boy himself being willing, she at length gave her reluctant consent.

About two years after she began to pay a serious attention to religion, but for some time was very fluctuating. While under the sound of instruction she would be affected sometimes to tears. This was often the case at our adult Sabbath-school; though afterwards, as she says, she would throw the subject off, and become, in a measure, indifferent. Again, impressed with the idea that there could be no mercy for such a creature as herself, and the thought of her religious state making her unhappy, she would avoid being present at our meetings. Yet, she says, she often felt so strong a desire to hear the sound of prayer and singing, that she has gone to the door and remained there as long as she thought she could without being discovered, sometimes till nearly frozen. During most of that winter she felt such uneasiness of mind that, not daring herself to look to God for mercy, because she was such a sinner, she felt it a relief to hear the worship of others; as if God

might possibly hear their prayers, though she was unworthy to be present. During the spring she was greatly distressed. When gathering maple sap she often had thoughts like these: "Here I am, going the same round daily from tree to tree, and can find no relief; I must always carry this wicked heart, and when I die, be miserable for ever." A pious Indian woman used to converse with her, and, after praying, would ask her if she did not feel the importance of joining with her in heart. She said she did; and though there was, to her mind, no prospect of ever being better, yet she would often feel strong desires for mercy. After her return from the sugar camp, she thought that every one must look upon her condition as hopeless; and, as before, she often stayed away from divine worship, because she thought herself unfit to be there. During the following summer she seemed at times to awake to an affecting view of her religious state, and with such feelings that she would go and pray and weep alone; but for the most part she indulged in despair, and found no relief.

The next autumn Eliza and her son Joseph were both taken ill. The child had profited by the instructions received, and spoke to her much; but she said she was like one who had lost her senses, and nothing seemed to move her feelings. Joseph became dangerously ill, and showed the influence of religious instruction on his mind in the time of affliction. He had a long conversation with her; he told her that he should die soon, and that he wanted her to promise him never to drink any more whiskey, to remain with the mission family, listen to their instructions, love God, and pray every day to him; then, when she died, she would go to God and be with him. At first she told him, that if he died she would die too. But Joseph said that was wrong; for that God only had a right to call her to die when he saw fit. At length she promised him that she would remember and do as he had requested.

During the whole scene of Joseph's death and funeral her behavior was singularly calm and solemn; so much so that it was noticed by all. When she perceived that his

spirit was really gone, the tears rolled down her face, and she exclaimed, in Indian, "My son! my son!" but further than this not a complaint or groan was heard to escape her lips.

After the funeral I sat down with her and had a long conversation. Among other things, I asked her why it was that she appeared as she now did, and whether it had been so at the death of her other children. She said no; for she had, as is common among the Indians, wailed and mangled her body in her affliction. "I have no such feelings now—God is good, and I feel that what he has done must be right." Although she expressed no consciousness of the love of God in her soul, yet she gave evidence that her feelings were under the sanctifying influence of the Holy Spirit. Nor was it long, before, through the mercy of her heavenly Father, she began to experience peace and joy in believing in Christ. Her soul was also filled with love to all the members of the mission family, and she said she felt that her own children had never been so near her heart as they. At times her mind would recur to the scene of her son's death; but, to use her own expression, literally interpreted, "I felt as if I was in a narrow, happy way; and if a thought came to me about Joseph, it seemed like being drawn out of this way, and I longed to get back immediately." With these feelings towards God and Christians, she now became very anxious for the souls of her own people, and said, "O, if they could only see as I do, how happy they would be!"

When asked about the state of her mind afterwards, she said, "I have always been happy in God since then. The more I have seen of the love of God in Christ, and the longer I have lived, the more I have desired to love him, and to love him more and more, and to be more and more like him in my soul. I do not know that I have since ever had any sorrow of soul so great as I have had for those who are ignorant of God. Sometimes, when going into church, or while there, it has made me weep to think of those who do not love God. There has never been any

day since I found peace to my soul, when I did not feel that God was with me. Every Sabbath," she said, "I have felt that this leaves me one Sabbath less to be in this world, and brings me one Sabbath nearer the time when I shall be with Christ."

About two years since, she was reduced quite low, and one evening was thought to be dying; but expressed joy in the prospect of being soon with God. "I long to be gone," said she, "I want to have the time come." Afterwards she felt that she had expressed impatience, and it grieved her so that she had several seasons of weeping on account of it.

At another time she had gone to bed, and, as she supposes, had not slept long, when she awoke and felt a desire to pray. She arose and knelt, but in a few moments fell asleep on her knees. This occurred again; but awaking the second time, she feared that her love to God was decaying. With tears and a burdened heart she set about prayer in earnest; her soul was so full she could not sleep, and she spent the remainder of the night in prayer and joy in God.

I afterwards put several questions to her: "You said, before you found peace in Christ, that for many months you felt yourself wretched, and that you often prayed; was it for the merits of these prayers that God gave you peace?" "No, it was because of Christ's pity to my soul; because he died for poor sinners; and it was of God's mercy that missionaries were sent to teach me." "Do you mean that you never have had any fears that you were deceived?" "I have always felt sure that God has had mercy on my soul; and the more I have thought on my old wicked life, the more it has drawn me near to God; it has made me feel more humble in myself, and a strong desire to live only for him." "But should God take away his Spirit from your heart and leave you to yourself, what do you think would become of you?" "I should be good for nothing." "Have you any fears that God will take away his Spirit from your soul?" "No." "Why?"

"From what I have heard of his word, he has promised to keep those that trust in him; and I believe he is faithful to his word." "There have been several times in your sickness when you have been very low, and have had reason to think you should live but a short time; have you, at none of these times, been unwilling or afraid to die?" "No." "Have you constantly felt that if it were God's will it would be a privilege to die, and you would be glad to have the hour come?" "Yes, I have. This fall, when I was very sick for two days and nights, and felt that God only could make me better or take me away, I thought, if it were his will, how glad I should be to be sure that I was dying, that I might be with God." "A year ago last spring you were received into the church; can you tell me any thing of your feelings at that time?" "After I understood that Christ had commanded it, I had a very strong desire to join myself to his people; nor was there any thing in this world I felt to be so great a privilege. When I promised solemnly to be for God, I really felt in my heart every word, and that I was now all the Lord's, and no more for myself, or for any other. I was happier than I can express." "Have your seasons of communion with the Lord's people been always precious?" "Yes, every one of them. I have heard more of the Saviour, and have learned more of his love from the Bible; I have felt, if possible, more and more near to him and happy in him." "What good do you think a profession of religion could do you without a heart to love the Saviour?" "None; there would be no joy to my soul." "Could you have this joy and peace of which you have told me, if you did not, as far as you know, strive to serve God in all things?" "No, I could not. Though unable to labor with my hands for God, it is my sincere desire daily to have my heart much in prayer for the salvation of others; and because God lets me live, I believe he wishes me to be devoted in spirit to this." "Do you think you love God and souls as much as you ought?" "No, I try to love, but do not feel as much as I ought." "When do you expect to have

perfect love to God and souls?" At first she answered, "Never;" thinking that I meant while in the body; but afterwards said, "When I get to heaven."

From this time her bodily powers failed, but she was strengthened in the Lord day by day. Her sufferings were great; but she was uniformly patient and happy. It was the daily practice for some member of the family to take an interpreter and spend some time in reading the Bible to her. She frequently spoke of these privileges with exquisite delight. On one occasion she expressed a fear that her faith was growing weak, and requested me to read about Elijah's praying for rain; adding, she had never forgot that since she first heard it. The chapter was read, and also the last of James. She seemed much strengthened, and often gave her assent while we were reading. I asked her what she understood by it, and how it applied to her. She answered, "We should pray as earnestly for the Spirit as Elijah did for rain, and God would as certainly send down a shower of grace." This was on the evening of the monthly concert of prayer. I asked her if she knew that this night Christians throughout the world were praying. She answered, "Yes, I have been thinking of it all day, and when I heard the bell ring I knew it and felt glad." We then sang a verse, and two of the mission children prayed in Indian. It was a precious season, and before we closed Eliza seemed to be again on the mount.

As a member of the family was passing the door that led to Eliza's room, she heard her singing in her own language, "Heavenly Father, come down and take thy wanderer home, for I want to be with thee. O how I long to be with thee. Come, Lord Jesus, come."

On Saturday evening, as another entered her room, she took her affectionately by the hand, and began to express her feelings, but was so much affected that she could not proceed. The next day the same individual carried her "The Life of Christ." While looking at the plates, she discovered much emotion, particularly with the view of the Saviour's bearing the cross, and said, He was now near

her. She then said, "I wish you to know that I did not weep yesterday for my pain and suffering, but for joy. God was very near. I did not rest while he was so near, but prayed all the time." To her heathen sister, who was sitting by, she then turned and said, "You must not weep for me when I am gone; I am going to a better country."

As we were daily expecting her death, I took the little girls of the mission to see her. While they were viewing her emaciated frame, she faintly said, "Listen to instruction—love God, that you may meet me in heaven."

On the day of her death she repeatedly said, "I think I shall go to-day." In the afternoon she requested that the Indian hymn, "And must this body fail," etc., might be sung.

After it was finished one of the missionaries asked if it expressed her feelings. She said, "Yes." She was then told, if she kept her eyes on Jesus he would not forsake her, but go with her through the dark valley. With much emphasis she pronounced *Bagish*, the Indian word for yes, and appeared to be filled with the Holy Ghost. She continued to fail through the evening. As one went in to bid her farewell for the night, she clasped her hand, with eyes beaming with pleasure, saying, "I think I shall go to-night!" She then bade her a solemn, affectionate, and cheerful farewell; and, in allusion to David's words, said she "feared no evil." Soon after she became speechless. One who was attending her remarked, "You will soon get through." She cast her wishful eyes towards heaven, and seemed to say, I hope soon to be *there;* and about eleven in the evening, November, 1830, she died.

Reader, beware lest, when you meet this benighted heathen in the day of judgment, "*a ransomed soul*," you be, by your own criminal rejection of Christ, "*yourself thrust out.*"

No. 294.

MARKS OF SAVING FAITH.

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That men may doctrinally believe the truth of the Gospel without a saving faith in Christ, and without an interest in him, is a truth clearly taught in the Scriptures, and abundantly evident from our own experience and observation.

"What then," you ask, "is *the plain distinction between a* SAVING *and a* DEAD *faith?*" I answer,

1. A *true and saving faith* involves a *realizing and sensible impression* of the truth of the Gospel; whereas a *dead* faith is but a mere *speculative* belief of it. Faith, as described by the apostle, is "the *substance* of things hoped for, and the *evidence* of things not seen;" that which brings eternal things into a near view, and presents them to the soul as *realities*. Hence the true believer, when he is wearied out of all his false refuges, emptied of all hope in himself, and brought to see and feel the danger and misery of his state by nature, is then brought in earnest to *look to Jesus*, as the only refuge and safety to his soul. He then sees the incomparable excellency of a precious Saviour, breathes with ardent desire after him, repairs to him as the only fountain of hope, and "rejoices in Christ Jesus, having no confidence in the flesh." Now, the blessed Saviour and his glorious salvation is the subject of his serious, frequent, and delightful contemplation. Now, an interest in Christ is valued by him above all the world, and he is in earnest to obtain and preserve good evidence that his hope in Christ is well founded. He mourns under a sense of his former sins, groans under the burden of remaining corruption and imperfection, and with earnest diligence follows after holiness.

On the other hand, a *dead faith* often leaves the man secure and careless, trifling and indifferent in the concerns

of the eternal world. These appear to him but distant futurities, which do not engage his solemn attention, nor give any effectual check to his inordinate appetites and passions. Or if, as it sometimes happens, any awakening dispensation alarms the conscience of such a person, drives him to external reformation, and makes him more careful and watchful in his conduct, he has yet no sensible, impressive view of the way of salvation by Jesus Christ. He either endeavors to pacify the justice of God and his own conscience by his religious performances, and so lulls himself asleep again in his former security, or else continues to agonize under most dark, dreadful, and unworthy apprehensions of the glorious God, as if he were implacable and irreconcilable to such sinners as himself. Such a person would readily acknowledge, but he cannot feel this blessed truth, that Christ Jesus is a sufficient Saviour. He allows it to be truth, yet he does not humbly and joyfully venture his soul and his eternal interest upon it.

Thus a true faith realizes the great truths of the Gospel by a lively and feeling discovery of them, giving the "light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ." A false faith gives but a lifeless and inactive assent to these important truths. The one influences the heart and affections, and "by beholding with open face, as in a glass, the glory of the Lord, changes the soul into the same image, from glory to glory." The other only swims in the head, and leaves the heart in a state either of security or despondency. The one is an abiding principle of divine life, from which flow rivers of living water; the other is transient and unsteady, and leaves the soul short of any spiritual principle of life and activity.

2. A *saving faith cordially embraces the terms* of the Gospel, while a *dead* faith is but a *cold assent to its truth.* Accordingly, true faith is in the Gospel described to be a receiving of the Lord Jesus Christ. "To as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God." Our blessed Redeemer is freely offering himself and his saving benefits to poor perishing sinners. Our com-

pliance with and acceptance of the gospel offer, are the terms of our interest in him. They, therefore, and they only, are true believers in Christ, who heartily acquiesce in the glorious method of a sinner's recovery from ruin by Jesus Christ, and cordially accept an offered Saviour, in all his offices and benefits. A true believer, convinced of his natural blindness and ignorance, repairs to the Lord Jesus to enlighten his mind, to make his way plain, and to give him a clear and spiritual acquaintance with the great things of his eternal peace. The true believer has found, by experience, his utter incapacity to procure the divine favor by any reformations or moral performances, and that he has cause to be ashamed and confounded in his own sight for the great defects of his highest attainments in religion; and therefore welcomes Christ to his soul as the "Lord his righteousness;" repairs to him, and to him only, "for wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption;" and builds all his hope of acceptance with God upon what Christ has done and suffered for him. The true believer is heavy laden with the sinfulness of his nature, and longs for entire victory over his corrupt affections, appetites, and passions, for pure spirituality in his duties, and for perfection in holiness, and therefore heartily desires and accepts the Lord Jesus as his *Sanctifier* as well as *Saviour*, and earnestly seeks the renewing, strengthening, and quickening influences of his Spirit. The true believer feels the necessity of this blessed Saviour in all his offices, relations, and characters. He sees him to be just such a Saviour as his soul wants, and therefore cheerfully accepts a whole Christ with his whole heart, without any desire of other terms of acceptance with God. He may entertain dark apprehensions of himself, and complain heavily of the great defects of his faith and holiness, but he can never entertain hard thoughts of the *gospel scheme*, nor complain of the terms of salvation: these appear to him "the wisdom of God and the power of God," and every way suited to the exigencies of his state and the desires of his soul.

But a *dead faith* never brings the soul to consent to the

terms of the Gospel without some exception and reserve. The unsound believer may imagine that he accepts the Lord Jesus as his Saviour; but what is the foundation and encouraging motive of his imaginary compliance with the gospel offer? Upon an impartial inquiry it will always be found to be something *in himself:* his good affections, duties, moralities, reformations, promises, or purposes. He endeavors by these to recommend himself to God; and on account of these he hopes to find acceptance through Christ. Or if he feels ever so strong a desire of salvation by Christ, yet he is driven to it only by *fear* and *self-love,* and will renew his affections to his *other lords* as soon as his awakening apprehensions are worn off. He does not feel his want of Christ's enlightening and enlivening influences, for he knows not what they mean. He "submits not to the righteousness of Christ;" for he is still endeavoring to procure acceptance with God by some good qualifications of his own, some duties which he performs, or some progress which he makes, or designs to make, in his religious course. He cannot submit to Christ as his *Lord,* for there is some slothful indulgence which he cannot forego, some darling lust which he cannot part with, some worldly idol which his heart is set upon, or some difficult duty from which he must excuse himself.

There is nothing more apparent than the *distinction* between these two sorts of believers. The one comes to Christ destitute of all hope and help in himself, but sees enough in Christ to answer all his wants: the other is full in himself. The one looks to Christ to be his light: the other leans to his own understanding. The one makes mention of Christ's righteousness, and that only: the other hopes for an interest in Christ and his salvation on account of his own attainments; and, in effect, expects justification by his own righteousness, for Christ's sake. The one brings a guilty, polluted, unworthy soul to the blessed Redeemer, without any qualification to recommend it, expecting from him alone all the supplies he wants—repairing to him for "gold tried in the fire, that he may be rich; for eye-salve,

that he may see; and for white raiment, that he may be clothed:" the other ordinarily raises his expectations from Christ in proportion to his own imaginary qualifications and good disposition. The one desires salvation by Christ from pollution as well as from guilt: the other has a reserve of some deceitful lust, and hugs some Delilah in his bosom which he cannot be willing to part with. In fine, the one is willing to accept of the Lord Jesus Christ upon any terms: the other will not come to Christ but upon terms of his own stating.

3. A *saving* faith is an humble *trust in Christ, as the author of our salvation;* but a *dead* faith always builds upon some *false* foundation, or upon none at all. A *saving* faith is often described in Scripture by a "trusting in the Lord, committing our way to him, resting on him," and such like expressions, which suppose an humble confidence in the abundant sufficiency of the Redeemer's merits, and the boundless riches of God's mercy in him. Accordingly, the true believer, in his greatest darkness and discouragement, ventures his soul and eternal interests in the hands of Christ. His past sins may appear in most frightful forms, vastly numerous, dreadfully aggravated; still, he humbly trusts that "the blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth from all sin." He may be oppressed with the sense of the defects of his duties and religious attainments, but he yet sees *righteousness* enough in Christ for a safe foundation of confidence. This, and this alone, keeps his soul from sinking, answers the clamors of conscience, and disposes him to rely upon the free grace and mercy of God. He may be distressed with the prevalence of his inward corruptions; he may, in an unguarded hour, be surprised and foiled by the power of his sinful appetites or passions, or by some unexpected temptation; but, even in this case, his refuge is in that blessed "Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous." And though, from sad experience of his own dreadful imperfections, he may be ready to question his state, and to fear lest he be deceived, he ventures that also in the hands of Christ, and depends upon him, that he will not leave him to a soul-ruining deceit, but will "guide him by his counsel,

and afterwards receive him to glory." Such a dependence upon Christ the believer ordinarily exercises in his darkest hours. But when he is in the more lively exercise of grace, he "knows whom he has believed, and that he is able to keep that which he has committed to him against that day." With this confidence, he can even "glory in tribulation;" he can cheerfully look death itself in the face, and triumph over the king of terrors.

On the contrary, the *false believer* ordinarily raises his expectations and encouragements from something *in himself*. His good frames, his joys and comforts, his endeavors or designs to serve God, are what he has to depend upon; and upon these he does and will depend, and perhaps will never see his mistake until it be too late. Some of these, indeed, do not find even this false foundation to build upon, but quiet their souls with a loose and general hope. They believe that God is merciful, and that Jesus Christ came to save sinners; or they hope they shall some time or other obtain grace, though they find none at present. Thus many go on quietly in their sins, dwell *at ease*, and cry *peace* to their souls, until the flood of God's displeasure sweeps away their refuges of lies. Others there are who, by means of a better education, or from some awakening sense of guilt and danger, cannot but see that these beds are too short to stretch themselves upon, and therefore their faith is their torment. They believe in Christ as their Judge, but not as their Saviour. They are harassed with fear and anxiety whenever conscience is awake to any serious apprehension of a future world. Thus they live under a "spirit of bondage," never venturing their souls upon the pardoning mercy of God and the infinite merit of the Redeemer's blood.

Nothing can be more apparent than the difference between these two sorts of believers. The *one*, in all his straits, fears, difficulties, and dangers, looks to Christ as to a sure foundation of safety, confidence, and hope; and though he may at some times doubt his interest in him, he can at no time deliberately place his confidence, or expect safety for his soul anywhere else. The *other* leaves the soul asleep,

or else seeks rest only from the righteousness of the law, from desires and endeavors of his own, and must either find comfort there, or nowhere. The *one* ventures all his interests, and all his hopes of grace and glory, upon the faithfulness of the gospel promises and the infinite mercy of God in Christ. The *other* sees not how to quiet the accusations of his conscience, and obtain qualifications for salvation, by depending upon a naked promise. In a word, the *one* can see safety and security in leaving all the concerns both of time and eternity in the hands of Christ. The *other*, being ignorant of the righteousness of Christ, must make the righteousness of the law his refuge, or else live without hope.

4. A *saving* faith *subjects the soul to Christ;* but a *dead* faith leaves the soul *unrenewed and disobedient.* A true "faith purifies the heart" and "overcomes the world;" and "he that hath this hope" in Christ "purifieth himself, even as he is pure." A true faith unites the soul to Christ, as the branch is united to the vine, and thereby enables the man to bring forth much fruit. The true believer hates every false way; he mourns over, and watches, strives, and prays against all the corruptions of his nature, and all the imperfections of his heart and life. There is no known sin which he indulges himself in; no known duty which he willingly neglects; no difficulty which can deter him from following Christ; no temptation which can allure him from endeavoring a conformity to the whole will of God. "Not as though he had already attained, or were already perfect." He has daily cause to lament his defects, but yet he can truly say that "he delights in the law of the Lord after the inward man;" and accordingly endeavors, in every station and relation, in all his conduct, both to God and man, as well in secret as openly, to live a life of conformity to God in all the duties he requires of him.

But, on the other hand, the seeming obedience of a *false believer* is very partial, defective, temporary, and but a matter of force and constraint upon the appetites and affections. If, with Herod, he reforms, and "does many things," yet he retains some darling corruption unmortified, or leaves

some duty neglected. Or if, by the lashes of an awakened conscience, he is driven for a time to a more general reformation from all known sin, and to outward attendance upon all known duty, he finds no inward complacency in it, and therefore is like a dull horse, that will be kept on his way no longer than he feels a spur in his side.

Here, then, is a conspicuous difference between a true and false believer. The *one* has a principle of holiness, a delight in it, and an earnest and continuing desire after further proficiency in the divine life. The *other* aims only at so much holiness as he thinks will save him from hell, but cares for nothing more; and what he has is excited by fear or constrained by force, contrary to the real tendency and bias of his soul. In fine, the *one* makes it the endeavor of his life to approve himself to a pure, holy, and omniscient God. The *other* rests in endeavors to quiet conscience and silence its clamors.

5. A *saving* faith works by *love to God and man;* but a *dead* faith always falls short of both. The apostle assures us, that "if we have all faith, so that we could remove mountains, and have not charity, (or love,) we are nothing. Faith worketh by love;" and the true believer "keeps himself in the love of God, looking to the mercy of the Lord Jesus Christ for eternal life." He delights in contemplating the perfections of the divine nature. His meditations upon God are sweet, and the thoughts of him precious to his soul. If he can have the glorious God for his portion, and live in the light of his countenance, he can be content with straits and difficulties, trials and afflictions. He takes peculiar pleasure in the ordinances of God, and all the appointed means of a near approach into his special presence; and often enjoys sensible communion with him. He heavily complains of his own deadness or worldliness, which separates between God and his soul, and can find no true rest or satisfaction till he returns to him. This is the ordinary course and tenor of the believer's life; and if at any time he grow forgetful of God, and have the prevalence of a dead, carnal, worldly frame in his soul, this darkens the evidence

of his state, robs him of comfort and peace, and will at length put him upon vigorous and active endeavors for obtaining a revival of his languishing graces, by a fresh supply of the spirit of Jesus Christ. Thus the true believer has the love of God dwelling in him.

And from the same principle he likewise loves his *neighbor* as himself. He maintains a life of justice, meekness, kindness, and beneficence towards all men, bears injuries, is ready to forgive, entertains the best opinion of men's states and actions that the case will allow, and endeavors to live in the exercise of "love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness." And as he thus maintains a love of *benevolence* to all men, he has, in a special manner, a love of *complacence* towards those who bear marks of the divine image. These he delights in, because the children of God. He loves them for their heavenly Father's sake, as well as for those gracious qualifications which make "the righteous more excellent than his neighbor." He loves the company of the saints: these are "the excellent in whom is all his delight." He loves their piety, and studies an imitation of them wherein they follow Christ; and studies to equal, if not excel them in their highest improvements in religion. He loves their persons, and hopes to join in concert with them in the eternal praises of God.

The highest attainments of a *dead faith* fall short of every part of this description. The false believer may imagine that he has something of *love to God* in him; but, upon a just view, it will appear that it is only to an *idol*, the creature of his own imagination. If he seems to love God under an apprehension of his goodness and mercy, he yet dreads him on account of his justice, and has an inward aversion to his purity and holiness; so that the object of his love is an imaginary being of infinite mercy, without either justice or holiness. If, from the alarms of conscience or the emotions of his natural affections, he takes some pleasure in religious exercises, this pleasure is short and transient, like the principle whence it flows; he soon sinks into carelessness and forgetfulness of God, and has his affections quickly

engaged in worldly and sensual pursuits. And however he may deceive himself in any supposed progress in religion, he can never satisfy his soul with having God for his portion. He can never, of course, keep up a life of spiritual-mindedness and delight in God.

The same defects are likewise found in the unsound believer with respect to his love to his *neighbor*. If he be not, as is too commonly found, unjust and deceitful, wrathful and contentious, hard-hearted and unkind, bitter and censorious, revengeful and implacable, yet he never loves the children of God as such. Whatever love he may have to any such from intimate acquaintance, or from their being in the same cause, party, or persuasion with himself, which is, indeed, no more than the exercise of selfishness, he never loves the image of Christ in every sect or party in whom he finds it, nor can he love a conformity to the children of God in the holiness of their hearts and lives.

Here, then, you see a difference in these two kinds of believers. The *one* loves God above all things; and, indeed, he that does not love him with a supreme love, does not love him as God, and consequently does not love him at all. But the *other* seeks the favor of God from no other motive but fear of his displeasure, or some desire of happiness, and not from a sense of the excellency of his glorious perfections. The *one* loves what God loves, hates what he hates, and is satisfied with himself only in proportion to his conformity to God. The *other* retains his delight in his lusts and idols, and repairs to God because he dare not do otherwise. The *one*, like God himself, takes pleasure in doing good to all men; and takes special delight in all, without distinction, who are partakers of the divine nature. The *other*, at the best, has his love to man influenced by selfish principles.

6. A *saving* faith *humbles the soul*, and makes it *low and vile in its own eyes;* whereas a *dead* faith tends to *exalt* the mind with vain apprehensions of some sufficiency or excellence of its own. The *true believer* has a deep sense of the greatness and aggravation of his sins, *loathes* himself on account of them, and adores the long-suffering of God to-

wards him, that has kept him out of hell. He is so sensible of the great defects of his duties, of the sinfulness of his heart, the imperfections of his life, and his utter unworthiness of any favor from God, that he cannot but entertain a most deep and sensible impression that it must be a wonderful display of mere sovereign grace if he obtains salvation. It is always true, that the greater manifestation of God's love is made to his soul, the greater sense he has of his own nothingness and unworthiness, and the more he admires and adores the astonishing riches of free distinguishing *grace* to such a guilty, polluted creature as he is. Though the true believer lives in the exercise of that *charity* towards others which "thinketh no evil, but believeth all things, and hopeth all things;" he yet always finds occasion to condemn himself, and to censure his own inward affections and outward performances, religious duties and moral conduct, and therefore cannot but esteem *others better than himself.* He finds occasion of renewed repentance every day: he every day finds new cause to complain of himself, and new cause to commit a sinful and unworthy soul to the mere mercy of God in Christ.

On the contrary, a *dead faith* always either *puffs up the mind* with a haughty, pleasing apprehension of its own attainments, makes it censorious and uncharitable, and inspires it with that proud pharisaical language, "I thank God, I am not as other men;" or else, from the same haughty principle, either leaves the soul *secure* and *easy* in its good designs and purposes of future repentance, or *impatient* and *desponding,* through want of those good qualifications which it supposes necessary.

And now to sum up the whole in a short and easy view, If you have good evidence of a *saving faith* in Christ, you must have such a *sensible impression* of the truth of the Gospel as makes you feel the importance of your eternal concerns, and your necessity of an interest in Christ, and puts your soul upon earnest and active desires after him, as your only hope and safety. You must heartily *approve the way of salvation* which the Gospel reveals, and heartily con-

sent to the terms on which it is offered. You must *accept of Christ as a free gift,* bringing nothing with you of your own to recommend you to his acceptance. You must accept him as your only righteousness to justify you before God, and as your Prince as well as Saviour, consenting as well to be governed as to be saved, to be sanctified as to be justified by him. And as you must receive him, so you must confidently trust in him alone, as a sure foundation of safety and hope, and as a continuing fountain of all supplies of grace to your soul, whatever difficulties and discouragements you may meet with. And you must have this standing evidence of the sincerity of your faith, that it *purifies your heart,* and brings you to an earnest endeavor after habitual holiness of heart and life; that it works by *love to God and man,* and keeps up in your soul at the same time *an abasing sense of your own vileness* and utter unworthiness. This is that precious faith to which alone the promises of the Gospel are made.

To conclude with a still shorter view. When a realizing belief of the Gospel, and a despair of all help in yourself, brings you to repair to Christ as your only safety, and to venture your soul, guilty as it is, upon the merit of his obedience, the sufficiency of his grace and strength, and the faithfulness of his promises, and heartily to submit to his rule and government, you cannot fail of the sanctifying influences of his Spirit to qualify you for the eternal inheritance; for "the Amen, the faithful and true Witness," has given you his word for it, that if you thus "come to him, he will in nowise cast you out."

I might sum up this important point in a yet shorter view. If you so heartily approve of and delight in the gospel way of salvation by Christ alone, that you can cheerfully venture your soul and your eternal interests upon it, as the sure and only foundation of hope and safety, you have then true faith. And in this case, he that has bestowed such grace upon you, will carry on his own work in your soul, and will at last present you faultless before his throne, with exceeding joy.

No. 295.

MARKS

OF

TRUE REPENTANCE.

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You ask the distinction between a *legal* and an *evangelical* repentance. To give a clear view of the subject, I will first name some particulars wherein the distinction does *not* consist.

A deep *distress* of mind on account of *sinning against God*, is common both to legal and evangelical repentance. Even Judas could cry out with agony of soul, "I have sinned in betraying innocent blood;" as well as the Psalmist groan out his complaint, that there was "no rest in his bones because of his sins."

A *fearful apprehension of the divine displeasure* may be common to both sorts of penitents. Mere legal convictions may make "sinners in Zion afraid, and fearfulness surprise the hypocrite;" and "destruction from God may be a terror" to a holy Job, in as great reality, though not with such despairing infidelity, as to a Cain or Judas.

Dread of outward and known courses of sinning, and a temporary *reformation* from them, may likewise be the consequence of both a legal and evangelical repentance. Ahab humbled himself, lay in sackcloth, and went softly; and Herod reformed many things, as well as David "refrained

his feet from every evil way." It is impossible for a sinner to give the reins to his lusts while under the lashes of an awakened conscience; a mere legal conviction must, while it lasts, produce an external reformation.

Men may be brought to *diligence and activity in external duty*, by both a legal and evangelical repentance. An insincere repentance may bring men, with the hypocritical Jews, to "seek the Lord daily;" as true repentance always brings men "to lift up their hearts and their hands to God in the heavens."

A *comforting persuasion of having obtained pardoning mercy* is common to both kinds of penitents. God's ancient people, when most incorrigible in their impiety, would "trust in lying words, come and stand before him in the house that was called by his name, and say, We are delivered to do all these abominations." The Israelites in the wilderness concluded that "God was their rock, and the most high God their Redeemer, when they flattered him with their lips, and lied to him with their tongues, and their hearts were not right with him." And on the other hand, the true penitent may say with David, "I said, I will confess my transgressions unto the Lord; and thou forgavest me the iniquity of my sins."

In short, it is not the deepest sense of sin or guilt, nor the most distressing sorrow on that account; it is not the fear of God's wrath, nor the greatest external reformation of life; it is not the most diligent external attendance upon duty, nor the most quieting persuasion of having made our peace with God, nor all these together, that will prove a man sincerely penitent; for all these may be, and have been attained by mere hypocrites, and often are found with the false as well as the true professor.

Having, by way of precaution, made these remarks, I now proceed directly to consider the *distinction between* LEGAL AND EVANGELICAL REPENTANCE.

1. A *legal repentance* flows only from a *sense of danger* and fear of *wrath;* but evangelical repentance is a true mourning for *sin*, and earnest desire of *deliverance* from it.

When the conscience of a sinner is alarmed with a sense of his dreadful guilt and danger, it must necessarily remonstrate against those impieties which threaten him with ruin. Hence those frights and terrors which we so commonly see in awakened sinners. Their sins, especially some grosser enormities of their lives, stare them in the face, with their peculiar aggravations. They are brought upon their knees before God to acknowledge their sins, and to cry for mercy; and now conscience, like a flaming sword, perhaps keeps them from their former course of impiety. And what is all this repentance, but mere terror and fear of hell? It is true, the law sometimes proves a schoolmaster to drive sinners to Christ; and conviction of sin, and a legal repentance, are a necessary preparative to a saving conversion; but these alone give no claim to the promise of the Gospel. The house may be thus empty, swept, and garnished but for the reception of seven worse spirits than were driven out of it; and a sinner may thus "escape the pollutions of the world," and yet have "his latter end worse than the beginning."

If, on the other hand, we consider the character of a sincere *gospel repentance*, though such legal terrors may lead to its exercise, they do not belong to its nature; nor are they any part of it. *Sin itself* becomes the greatest burden and aversion to a truly penitent soul. "I hate," says the psalmist, "every false way." "O wretched man

that I am!" says the apostle, "who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" Thus the penitent groans, being burdened; not for fear of hell, such fear being no part of true repentance, though it may sometimes accompany it, but from an affecting, humbling *sense of sin*. His language is, "I acknowledge my transgressions, and my sin is ever before me. Mine iniquities are gone over my head; as a heavy burden they are too heavy for me. Deliver me from all my transgressions. Let not my sins have dominion over me. Innumerable evils have compassed me about: mine iniquities have taken hold upon me, so that I am not able to look up; they are more than the hairs of my head; therefore my heart faileth me. Be pleased, O Lord, to deliver me: O Lord, make haste to help me." As the true penitent longs for more and more victory over his corruptions, so is he most watchful, prayerful, and in earnest to mortify his lusts, and to cut off all supplies of sin. There is nothing so grievous to him as sin, and nothing which he so earnestly desires as a nearer approach to that blessed state, where "nothing can enter which defileth or worketh abomination."

Here you see the difference between being driven from a course of sinning by the lashes of an awakened conscience, and loathing ourselves in our own sight, for all our iniquities and abominations. The former is merely the fruit of self-love, which prompts the soul to fly from danger: the latter is the exercise of a vital principle, which separates the soul from sin, and engages the whole man in a continued opposition to it.

2. A *legal* repentance flows from *unbelief;* but an *evangelical* repentance is *the fruit of saving faith.*

I have shown that a legal repentance is effected by fear-

ful apprehensions of hell. And whence this fear and terror? Has not the Gospel provided a glorious relief for such distresses, and opened a blessed door of hope for the greatest sinners? Is not pardon and salvation freely offered to all that will accept a blessed Saviour and his saving benefits? Is not the blood of Christ sufficient to cleanse from all sin, however aggravated? Why then do they not cheerfully fly for refuge to this hope set before them? Alas, they can see no safety in it! The law of God condemns their disobedience; conscience joins it, and hence their only refuge is resolutions, reformations, duties, penance, or some such self-righteous methods, to pacify God's justice and quiet conscience. The defect of their endeavors and attainments creates new terrors; their terrors excite new endeavors; and thus they go on, without "attaining to the law of righteousness, because they seek it not of faith, but as it were by the works of the law." They may, it is true, have some respect to Christ, in this their legal progress. They may hope that God will accept them for Christ's sake. They may use his name in their prayers for pardon, while they dare not depend upon the merits of his blood for the remission of their sins and a freedom from condemnation. And what is all this but a secret hope that the redemption of Christ will add such merit to their frights and fears, reformations and duties, as to make them atone for their sins, and purchase the favor of God? So that all their penitential appearances are nothing but the workings of unbelief.

The true penitent approaches God's presence with a deep impression of *his guilt and unworthiness*, and of his just *desert* of an eternal rejection from God. But then he comes before a mercy-seat. Though he is forced to acknow-

ledge that if God should mark iniquity he could not stand before him, he yet remembers that "with God there is forgiveness, that he may be feared;" and "that with him there is plenteous redemption." He looks to the blood of Christ as what alone can cleanse away his numerous and aggravated sins, and from thence he takes encouragement to mourn out the psalmist's language, "Wash me thoroughly from mine iniquity, and cleanse me from my sin. Purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean; wash me, and I shall be whiter than the snow." This is the prospect which both encourages and invigorates his cries for mercy, and imbitters his sins to him; and which makes him loathe them all, and long for deliverance from them all. "Is God infinitely merciful and ready to forgive," says the penitent soul, "and have I been so basely ungrateful as to sin against such astonishing goodness, to affront and abuse such mercy and love! Is sin so hateful to God, that his own dear Son must die? How vile, how polluted and abominable must I then appear in the eyes of his holiness and justice, that am nothing but defilement and guilt, from the crown of my head to the soles of my feet—nothing but wounds, and bruises, and putrefying sores! Has the blessed Saviour suffered his Father's wrath for my sins? Have they nailed him to the cross, and brought him under the agonies of an accursed death; and shall I be ever reconciled to my lusts any more, and go on to crucify the Son of God afresh? May I obtain strength from the Lord Jesus Christ for victory over my corruptions; and shall I not both resolve in his strength against them, and lie at his feet, that 'the law of the spirit of life in Christ Jesus may make me free from the law of sin and death?' Have I dishonored God so much already, loaded my precious Saviour

with so many indignities, and brought such a weight of guilt upon myself; and is it not now high time to bid an utter defiance to my most darling lusts, the greatest enemies to God and my own soul?" Such is the language of a gospel repentance.

You cannot but see the great distinction, and even contrariety, between a guilty flight of soul *from* God, like Adam after his fall, and an humbling, self-condemning flight *to* God's pardoning mercy, like the *prodigal*, when returning to his Father's house; between legal, slavish, self-righteous endeavors to atone for our sins and make our peace with God, and repairing only to the blood of Christ for cleansing from all sin; between mourning for our guilt and danger, and mourning for our sins, as they are against God, against a precious Saviour, against infinite mercy and love; and, in a word, between attempting a new life by the strength of our own resolutions and endeavors, and looking only to the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ for grace and strength, as well as pardon and freedom from condemnation.

3. A *legal* repentance flows from an *aversion to God and his holy law;* but *evangelical* repentance from *love to both.*

The distress, the terror and amazement that awakened sinners are under, arise from their dreadful apprehensions of God and his terrible justice. They know they have greatly provoked him, and are afraid of his wrath; and therefore want some covert, where they may hide themselves from his presence. They might before, perhaps, have some pleasing apprehensions of God, while they considered him as being all mercy without justice; and while they could hope for pardon, and yet live in their sins. But, now they have some sense of his holiness and justice, he appears an

infinite enemy, and therefore most terrible to their souls. They are consulting, indeed, some way to be at peace with him, because they are afraid the controversy will issue in their destruction. They resolve upon new obedience, from the same motives that slaves obey their severe, tyrannical masters; while the rule of their obedience is directly contrary to the bent, bias, and disposition of their souls. Were the penalty of the law taken away, their aversion to it would quickly appear, and they would soon embrace their beloved lusts with the same pleasure and delight as formerly. This is frequently exemplified in those who wear off their convictions and reformations together, and notwithstanding all their former religious appearances, discover the alienation of their hearts to God and his law by their sinful lives, and, as the apostle expresses it, show themselves "enemies in their minds, by wicked works."

But, on the contrary, the sincere *gospel penitent* sees an admirable beauty and excellency in *a life of holiness*, and therefore groans after higher attainments in it. He is sensible how much he has transgressed the law of God, how very far he is departed from the purity and holiness of the divine nature. This is the burden of his soul. Hence it is that he often walks in heaviness, and waters his couch with tears. He mourns, not because the law is so strict, or the penalty so severe, for he esteems "the law to be holy, and the commandment holy, just, and good;" but he mourns, that though "the law be spiritual," he is "carnal, sold under sin." He mourns, that his nature is so contrary to God, that his practice is so contrary to his will, and that he can make no better progress in mortifying the deeds of the flesh, in regulating his affections, appetites, and passions, and in living to God. He breathes with the same earnestness after

sanctification, as after freedom from wrath. He does not want to have the law bend to his corruptions, but to have his heart and life fully subjected to the law and will of God. There is nothing he so much desires as freedom from sin, proficiency in faith and holiness, and a life of fellowship with God. "O," says the penitent believer, "what a wicked heart have I, that is so estranged from the holy nature of God, and from his righteous law! What a guilty wretch have I been, who have walked so contrary to the glorious God, have trampled upon his excellent perfections, violated his holy law, and made so near an approach even to the nature of the devil! O for the cleansing efficacy of the blood of Christ, and the renewing influences of his Holy Spirit, to purify this sink of pollution, and to sanctify these depraved affections of my soul. 'Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me.' Let me be a partaker of the divine nature, and be brought near to God, whatever else be denied me. 'O that my ways were directed to keep thy statutes.'" Such are the aspirations of sincere repentance.

Thus the legal penitent looks upon God with dread, terror, and aversion of soul: the evangelical penitent mourns his distance from him, and longs to be more transformed into his image. The one still loves his sins, in his heart, though he mourns that there is a law to punish them; the other hates all his sins without reserve, and groans under the burden of them, because they are contrary to God and his holy law. The obedience of the one is by mere constraint; the imperfections of the other are matter of continual grief, and he is constantly longing and striving after greater degrees of grace and holiness. The one can find no inward and abiding complacency in the service of God; the

other runs in the way of his commandments with delight, and takes more pleasure in obedience than in any thing else.

4. A *legal* repentance ordinarily flows from *discouragement and despondency;* but an *evangelical* repentance is accompanied with a confiding *trust in God's mercy.*

I have already considered how a legal repentance is excited and maintained by terrors of conscience and fearful apprehensions of the wrath of God. Some, indeed, by their external reformations, pacify conscience, and cry peace to their souls; but while their concern continues, their desponding fears are the very life of it. They are afraid that God will never pardon and accept such rebels as they have been; and though they dare not neglect duty, they come with horror into the presence of God, as to an inexorable judge; and have nothing to keep their souls from sinking into despair but their good designs and endeavors, which yet are too defective to give them comfortable hope. And what is all this but a most ungrateful undervaluing the blood of Christ, limiting the goodness and mercy of God, and an implicit denying the truth of the whole Gospel of God our Saviour?

On the other hand, though the true *gospel penitent* may have a deeper impression of the greatness of his guilt than even the awakened, terrified legalist himself, yet he dare not despair of God's mercy. A fear and jealousy of our own sincerity may be consistent with true repentance, and perhaps sometimes serve to further its progress; yet all doubts of the faithfulness of the gospel promises, of the extensiveness of the divine mercy, and fears of our exclusion from the gospel offer; all apprehensions of our not being elected, of our having sinned away the day of grace, or sinned against the Holy Ghost; and all imaginations that our sins

are so circumstanced as not to admit of pardoning mercy, are inconsistent with the actings of a true repentance. A sincere penitent looks over the highest mountains which are raised before him by the greatness of his sins, his own misgiving heart, or the temptations of Satan, into an ocean of infinite goodness and mercy. Thither he will fly, and there he will hope, let his case appear ever so dark, and though every thing seems to make against him. And the more lively and comfortable his hope is, the more he is humbled and abased for his sins, and the more vigorous are his endeavors after a life of new obedience.

"I confess," says the truly penitent soul, "that my sins are like the stars of the firmament, and like the sand on the sea-shore, for multitude; that they are of a scarlet and crimson dye; and that it is of the infinite patience of God that such a guilty wretch is out of hell. But yet, great and dreadfully aggravated as are my sins, the merit of a Redeemer's blood is sufficient to atone for them all; and infinite mercy is still greater than my greatest sins. I will, therefore, cast my guilty soul at the footstool of a sovereign God, and rely on infinite mercy through a Redeemer. I will depend upon the blood of Christ, which cleanseth from all sin. O how will mercy triumph over such sins as mine. How great glory will God bring to the riches of his infinite grace, in the salvation of such a sinner as I, if ever I am saved. How will heaven ring with eternal hallelujahs on my account. Surely, I have sinned enough already. Let me no more add to the number and guilt of my sins, by distrust of God's mercy, or by doubting the sincerity of his invitations.

5. A *legal* repentance is *temporary*, wearing off with the convictions of conscience which occasion it; but an *evan-*

gelical repentance is the *daily exercise* of the true Christian.

We have sad and numerous instances of those who, for a while, appear under the greatest remorse for sin, and yet quickly wear off all their impressions, and return to the same course of impiety which occasioned their distress and terror; and thereby declare to the world that their goodness, like Ephraim's, was but as "a morning cloud and the early dew." And besides these, there seem to be some who quiet conscience and speak peace to their souls, from their having been in distress and terror for their sins, from their reformation of some grosser immoralities, and from a formal course of duty. They have repented, they think, and therefore conclude themselves at peace with God, and seem to have no great care or concern about either their former impieties or their daily transgressions. They conclude themselves in a converted state, and are therefore easy, careless, and secure. These may think, and perhaps speak loftily of their experiences; they may be blown up with joyful apprehensions of their safe state, but have no impressions of their sins, no mourning after pardon, no groaning under the burden of a wicked heart, imperfect duties, and renewed provocations against God. They perform their duties in a careless manner, with a trifling, remiss frame of soul, while the great concerns of an unseen, eternal world, are but little in their minds; and all their religion is a mere cold formality. They maintain the form, but are unconcerned about the power of godliness.

On the other hand, a saving *evangelical* repentance involves a *continual self-abasement and abhorrence of all sin*, both in the heart and life. The true penitent does not forget his past sins, and grow careless and unconcerned about

them, as soon as he obtains peace in his conscience, and a comforting hope that he is reconciled to God; but the clearer evidences he obtains of the divine favor, the more does he loathe, abhor, and condemn himself for sin, the more vile does he seem in his own eyes, and the more aggravated and enormous do his past sins appear. A sense of pardoning mercy makes Paul appear to himself "the chief of sinners," and speak of himself as a pattern of hope to all that shall come after him. The true penitent not only continues to abhor himself on account of his past guilt and defilement, but finds daily cause to renew his repentance before God. He finds so much deadness, formality, and hypocrisy in his duties, so much carnality, worldly-mindedness, and unbelief in his heart, so much prevalence of his sinful affections, appetites, and passions, and so many foils by the sin that easily besets him, that he cannot but "groan, being burdened, while he is in this tabernacle." Repentance, therefore, is the daily continued exercise of the Christian. "Have I hope," says the penitent soul, "that God has pardoned my sins? What an instance of pardoning mercy is this! How adorable is that wonderful grace, which has plucked such a brand out of the fire! And am I still daily offending against such mercy and love? Am I yet doing so little for him, who has done so much for me? Ah, vile, sinful heart! Ah, base ingratitude to such amazing goodness! O for more victory over my corruptions; for more thankfulness for such mercies; for more spirituality and heavenly-mindedness! What need have I, every day, to have this polluted soul washed in the blood of Christ, and to repair to the glorious Advocate with the Father for the benefit of his intercession! Not a step can I take in my spiritual progress without fresh supplies from

the fountain of grace and strength; and yet how often am I provoking him to withdraw his influences, in whom is all my hope and confidence. 'O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from this body of death?'" Thus the true penitent "goes with his face Zionward, mourning as he goes." And thus, in his highest attainments of comfort and joy, will he find cause to be deeply humbled before God, and to wrestle with him for renewed pardon, and new supplies of strengthening and quickening grace.

The difference between these two sorts of penitents is like that between the running of water in the paths after a shower, and the streams flowing from a living fountain; a legal repentance lasting no longer than the terrors which occasion it, but an evangelical repentance being a continued war with sin.

6. A *legal* repentance does at most produce only a *partial and external reformation;* but an *evangelical* repentance is a total change of *heart and life,* a *universal* turning from sin to God.

As some of the more gross iniquities most commonly lead the way to that distress and terror which is the life of a legal and insincere repentance; so a reformation of those sins too frequently wears off the impression, and gives peace and rest to the troubled conscience, without any further change. Or, at best, there will be some darling lusts retained, some right hand or right eye spared, some sweet morsel rolled under the tongue. If the legal penitent be afraid of the sins of commission, he may still live in the omission or the careless performance of known duty. Or, if he be more forward in the duties of God's immediate worship, he may still live in acts of injustice, strife, and uncharitableness towards men. If he shows some zeal and

activity in the service of God, he will yet, perhaps, have his heart and affections inordinately attached to the world, and pursue it as the object of his chief desire and delight. If he avoids all open sins, he yet little regards the sins of his heart, but lives in envy, malice, pride, carnality, unbelief, or some other such heart-defiling sin. To finish his character, whatever seeming progress he may make in religion, his *heart* is "not right with God," but is still going after his idols, still estranged from the power of godliness.

The character of the *sincere penitent* is directly contrary to this. He finds, indeed, continued occasion to lament the great imperfections of his heart and life, and accordingly seeks renewed pardon and cleansing in the blood of Christ. But though he has "not already attained, nor is already perfect," he is "pressing towards perfection." He is watching, striving against all his corruptions; aiming at, and endeavoring after further conformity to God, in all holy conversation and godliness. He is never satisfied with a partial reformation, with external duty, or with any thing short of a life of vital piety. He does not renounce one lust and retain another; content himself with the duties of the first table of the law, and neglect those of the second; nor quiet himself in a life of mere formal godliness; nor can he rest till he "rejoices in the testimony of his conscience, that in simplicity and godly sincerity, not with fleshly wisdom, but by the grace of God, he has his conversation in the world." All the actings of his mind, as well as his external conduct, fall under his strictest inspection, and he is ever earnest to approve himself to Him who "knows his thoughts afar off." His reformation extends not only to the devotions of the church, but of his family and his closet; not only to his conversation, but to his thoughts

and affections; not only to the worship of God, but to the duties of every relation he sustains among men; and, in a word, his repentance produces heavenly-mindedness, humility, meekness, charity, patience, forgiving of injuries, self-denial; and is accompanied with all other fruits and graces of the blessed Spirit. "It is the desire of my soul," says the sincere penitent, "to keep the way of the Lord, and never depart from my God. I would refrain my feet from every evil way, and walk within my house with a perfect heart. I know I have to do with a God who trieth the heart; I would, therefore, set the Lord always before me, and serve him with a perfect heart and a willing mind."

A legal repentance is an external reformation only, destitute of all the graces of the blessed Spirit. True repentance is a change of the heart, of the will and affections, as well as of the outward conversation; a change which is accompanied with all the fruits and graces of the Spirit of God. The one aims at just so much religion as will keep the mind easy, and calm the ruffles of an awakened conscience; the other aims at a holy, humble, watchful, and spiritual walk with God, and rests in no degree of attainments whatsoever.

Reader, I have thus laid before you some of the distinguishing marks of true repentance, not to gratify curiosity, or as a subject of useless speculation, but that, renouncing all sin, and casting yourself on the mercy of Christ, you may, through the sanctifying influences of the Holy Spirit, *exercise and practise that repentance which is "unto life, not to be repented of."*

MISTAKES OF PARENTS.

BY REV. JOHN A. VAUGHAN, D. D.

THE attention of parents is here invited to the consideration of their peculiar MISTAKES, DUTIES, and ENCOURAGEMENTS; principally the first.

OBJECT OF SABBATH-SCHOOLS MISTAKEN.

The Sabbath-school is an important *help* to the parent in training his child for God; but its object is too often misapprehended. In practice the parent seems to say, "My duties in the religious instruction of my offspring are now much relieved, if not entirely superseded. The teacher will see to this; he is far more capable than I am. If I say too much, I shall only weary my child. I will send him regularly to the school, and there he will grow wise unto salvation."

Here you may date the origin of many a child's want of interest in the Sabbath-school. Here you may see the cause of that unwilling mind, that wandering eye, that withering indifference, which so often meets the patient teacher, when the Sabbath lesson is taken in hand, or when the subject of religion is any way presented to the attention. It is not usually because you talk of religion that your children are weary, but because you have not done it earlier, or, doing it, have been grossly injudicious. It is not enough that you simply pray with them, and then leave them to their teacher: you must yourself labor for them, as well as pray. How can you expect that a pupil who spends but one hour in 168 with his teacher will be essentially benefited, if the remaining 167 of the week are under the influence of a parent who, it may be, is a warm admirer of Sabbath-schools, but goes no further; who never bestows a thought upon the appointed lesson, or upon the teacher who labors for him,

and never accompanies his children to the school to watch their growing interest in divine truth?

But begin early; consult frequently with the teacher; let your observing pupil have two instructors, who shall be one in their aim, their desires, their labors, their prayers. Let this be evident to him. Let him be instructed pleasantly in the subject of the lesson at home. Then occasionally, at least, follow him to the school; manifest that *yours is the work of Christian education*, and that you employ the school to *assist* in it; and you will not long complain of want of interest, unless past neglect has hardened the pupil to indifference. O, if Sabbath-schools were the common resort of parents, the united voice of thanksgiving would much oftener accompany the petition for converting grace.

But all this is far from enough. The *books* from the Sabbath-school library should be carefully inspected, not only to know their tendency, but that you may converse upon them, illustrate and apply what you find useful, and examine your children in what they read. By these means you will interest them, and check that sad propensity to seek for novelty rather than improvement, unhappily promoted by the present system of Sabbath-school reading. Says a learned judge, "I read every book my children bring into the house, even to the penny sheet."

INQUIRY AT A SABBATH-SCHOOL AS TO PREVIOUS PREPARATION.

The usual amount of this domestic preparation may be inferred from the following results of inquiries in a respectable Sabbath-school. Two questions were put to each pupil. 1. Was your lesson attended to at home? 2. Were you assisted? Of 184 members of the school, (it being winter,) 103 were present. To the first question, 66 answered in the affirmative. To the second, 24; and these last were assisted by 17 persons—the attention really given to the lesson being in some of these cases very far from a careful study. On that day no parent of any pupil visited the school. Every pupil in a Sabbath-school, even the youngest, should have an appointed lesson, if it be only a verse in one of Dr. Watts' hymns for children. And unless parents set apart a regular time for attending to this lesson, and see to it themselves, they cannot expect the needful preparation will be made.

TIME GIVEN TO RELIGIOUS INSTRUCTION.

Such instruction often loses its weight because it is seen by children to bear but a very small proportion, in the time allotted to it, to the various other subjects which are urged upon their attention. If it really were so important, is their natural inference, we should hear more of it. Let parents take this rebuke home, for it is just. It is not enough to send your child for six hours a day to school, and to allow him as many more for amusement or some common employments, and then recite before him, in your evening devotions, that religion is the most important subject to which old or young can possibly attend. Will he believe you? Or rather, will not your prayers be to him a mere form? Instead of thus keeping religion out of sight, there are a thousand ways in which, by example and by conversation, you may so mingle the motives to piety with daily business, and even amusements, that your child shall be at no loss to determine what rank holiness holds in your heart, and what rank it should occupy in his. Be on the watch, and you will not fail in opportunity. Two boys, in a boat on a river, being upset, were taken from the water nearly exhausted, and conveyed home. The moment they were sufficiently recovered, the mother addressed them, and in feeling language spoke of their deliverance: "Kneel down, my boys," said she, "and let us thank God for your preservation." Better far than swooning away with fright, as is too often the case with a fond mother. A lady who was then present remarked, "I shall never forget the impressiveness of that scene."

MODE OF CONVEYING RELIGIOUS INSTRUCTION—ILLUSTRATION.

Parents frequently misapprehend the proper *mode* of conveying what they most earnestly desire their children should know and receive. This may arise from mistaken views of the youthful capacities. There is a beautiful simplicity in the mind of a child, which requires patience and common sense in the mode of address. There is a freedom of inquiry peculiar to the intelligent child, which should be answered with much discretion. A little infant scholar of four, asked her sister, who was only three years older, "How can God wipe away the tears from their eyes when he hasn't got any handkerchief?" "It doesn't mean so,"

says her sister; "it means that he will keep them from crying." Startling as such queries may sometimes be, it should always be borne in mind from whence they proceed, and that much may then be allowed which at another age would be a direct impropriety. Even a smile in the midst of the most sacred things, which at forty might betray want of becoming seriousness, may frequently be expected in the child of four or of fourteen.

A cause of frequent failure in instruction, is the use of *language not adapted* to the capacities and feelings of children. A child perhaps rejects a general proposition, when a circumstance or anecdote within its own compass or observation, involving the same truth, might be fastened upon its attention. Parents of deep piety often lose sight of this law of the mind, and forget that the manner of the Bible itself is founded upon this very law. It was designed not only for the learned and reflecting, but for the uncultivated and the young, who are in this respect on the same footing. Where an important truth is to be impressed, we find a narration or a parable is given involving it, and the inference to the inquiring mind is irresistible, though the submission of the heart may not immediately follow.

Now follow this plan closely in early religious instruction. Think not to impress your children with eloquent and elaborate descriptions of holy truth or holy affections, but proceed by illustration and example. What would cause the adult Christian to glow with delight, may be lost upon your little auditor of five, ten, or twelve, bent perhaps the whole time upon some scheme which better suits his active and impatient little mind and limbs. Suppose your subject is a particular providence. You have deeply felt the nearness of God in some of his dealings, and, full of pious emotion, you seek to arrest your child with the current of your own reflections. But he is neither able nor willing to understand, perhaps will not attend, and you are disappointed. An injury is thus done to you and to him. Now try another mode. Watch your opportunity and improve it. Go then to the Bible, lead your child gently along the journey of Abraham to Mount Moriah. The little listener will soon notice every incident. When you see this, point him to the uplifted knife; and then, just as the son is about to die beneath the hand of the father, your child will hear the voice

of God averting the blow. Tell him in the same way of Elijah fed by ravens; or of Joseph's extraordinary history. Carry him at another time to the plain assertion of Christ, that not a "sparrow falls to the ground without our heavenly Father;" that the very "hairs of our head are all numbered;" and now he is prepared for the practical deduction, "Fear not, ye are of more value than many sparrows."

KNOWLEDGE OF SIN—CARELESSNESS IN FORGIVING FAULTS.

The principle just illustrated may be applied successfully to every important truth of this description. Urge upon a child continually that all men have sinned, and unless he has been otherwise interested in religious inquiry, these words will soon fall powerless upon the ear. But he has himself committed some fault which causes uneasiness. Leave this until you perceive a favorable moment, when there may be a more than usual sense of God's presence, perhaps when the activity of the day is past, and your child is committing himself quietly to rest. Now remind him of his fault; show him the unhappiness so closely connected with sin; point out some instances of the mournful retributions of sin, especially in the young, in your own neighborhood. He will at once perceive and feel that there is something wrong, something unhappy in self-indulgence, and that he himself is not exempt. Now call sin by its right name, and it will at least be known, if not avoided, in whatever garb it may appear. This will in most cases be a great point gained; and if you avoid the common error of confounding a parent's forgiveness with that of God, you may do much to lead him to the only source of pardon, to the Saviour. You may soon convince him, that although your share in the offence may be forgiven, God alone can forgive, so far as his commands have been broken. How sad the delusion which here overspreads the whole business of education! The child is sorry for a fault; a lie perhaps has been told; some care has been taken to enlighten the conscience, and he feels its condemning power. He comes to his parent and asks forgiveness in such a manner that the parent grants it at once. Now this may be right, but it is far from enough. Has there been no offence against the law of God, which parental love cannot clear away? While the child thinks the whole account settled, is there not

written against him a sentence in heaven, where he has sought no forgiveness? Never, then, suffer your child to forget the solemn truth, which was admitted by the Jews of old, "*Who can forgive sins but God only?*" If all sin is an offence against the great law of love to God, how can a serious parent dare thus to settle the account and silence conscience? As well might the trembling criminal, who has dipped his hands in blood, think that all is settled, when a verdict of "not guilty" has been returned in his favor, or when a pardon is received from the highest authority in the state, or even when his sentence is executed. The difference is only in degree. In kind it is the same with the faults of childhood. One who freely and carelessly forgives a lie may do much to ruin his child.

HEAVENLY ENJOYMENTS ILLUSTRATED.

The child must be at first approached through the senses. You must talk of what he can perceive, as the means of his attaining some idea of things unseen. For instance, your child has listened with delight to some eloquent display of mind; he has formed very exalted ideas of the intellect and attainments of others. It is immaterial whether he has felt this incipient admiration from a lecture, from an interesting and intelligent author, or from listening to sensible conversation. Now point him to an eternal, an infinite Mind, and show him that there must be unspeakable delight to the humble and the holy, in contemplating the powers and works of *such* a mind, and that to this delight there can be no end.

FRUITS OF RELIGIOUS INSTRUCTION NOT ALWAYS EVIDENT AT THE TIME.

Parents often seem to think that the religious character of their offspring must receive its whole impress in some single act. Struck by extraordinary cases of youthful conversion, and trusting that the special influences of the Spirit will cause the light suddenly to shine fully in the heart, there is a strong leaning to the belief that this favored moment must be very distinctly marked. Now, with God such may be the case, but not perhaps with you. If it were, you might know too much; and it would not be as with the "wind," which "bloweth where it listeth, and

thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh or whither it goeth." No; you must be steady and unceasing in your influence, your instructions, your means. God may work with them or without them, as he shall see fit; but your labor in the Lord shall not be in vain. "In the morning sow thy seed, and in the evening withhold not thy hand, for thou knowest not whether shall prosper, either this or that, or whether they both shall be alike good."

DISCOURAGEMENT.—DR. MORRISON.—ISAAC BARROW.

Closely connected with this, is the very common mistake of discouragement. No feeling of this kind should ever prevail with the faithful parent. Want of success should lead to self-inquiry, to vigorous effort, to a faithful study of the subject in all its parts, but never to discouragement. Such a feeling in the Christian betrays a want of humble confidence in the God of grace. The case of Dr. MORRISON cannot be too often urged—the ragged, abandoned, and hardened Sabbath-school boy, about to be dismissed by his discouraged teacher—one effort more, and he becomes the subject of penitence and of faith—then the learned and indefatigable translator for the Chinese, and then a star of first magnitude in the East, reflecting beams from the Sun of righteousness that may light millions to glory. Such was the early stupidity and hopeless conduct of that sound English divine, ISAAC BARROW, that, strange to say, his father, in utter despair of his graceless son, cried out, that if called to part with any child, he hoped it might be ISAAC. But God knew better.

THE SAILOR CONVERTED BY MEANS OF THREE WORDS.

A simple fact or two will show how it may be with every one that is born of the Spirit, and how it is with many. A rough sailor who kept watch on deck during the still hours of midnight, becomes thoughtful. On a sudden the words, "*Pray without ceasing,*" fall upon his memory, and then upon his conscience. What are these strange terms, and where did the command come from? He is roused to inquire, and soon recollects that, seven years before, he had strolled over London on the Sabbath. On passing through the immense building of St. Paul's, he had observed in one part, separated from the rest, a congrega-

tion at worship. He had looked in and remained long enough to hear the words, "Pray without ceasing." He had forgotten them, but now the contrast between the command and his neglect is forced upon him. He seeks divine forgiveness. He remembers that his chest contains at the bottom a despised and unopened Bible, which a careful mother had placed there years before. His impressions are deepened, the Holy Spirit sanctifies to him the truth, and "behold, he prayeth."

A YOUNG MAN CONVINCED OF SIN WHILE DISTURBING A SABBATH-SCHOOL.

Some time since a young man of Bellows Falls determined to add to his Sunday sports and amuse his ungodly associates by a visit of intrusion to the Sabbath-school. He had scarcely obtained firm footing within the room, when this reflection came over him, he knew not how, but to shake it off was impossible: "What motive can influence so many teachers to spend their time, their means, and unceasing toil in the religious instruction of others? It must be something very different from that which actuates me in disturbing them. Their reward is not here; mine is the wages of sin." He is for some time riveted to the floor, and when a teacher approaches with a friendly invitation, he suffers himself to be led like a lamb, and joins a class. His ungodly companions are his no longer, and he joins, shortly, the great company of those who are rejoicing on their way to heaven.

Now, in each of the above cases, who will say that other means, applied faithfully, might not have availed, and saved years of sin and sorrow? But who will say, in view of such cases, that there is ever ground for despair? Still more, when we see, in ten thousand other cases, sorrowful warnings against delay, what parent, whose heart has been warmed with the hope of the Gospel, will venture to omit a single act of fidelity to his offspring? His hope of success will rest only upon such a conscientious and unremitting faithfulness, that he can joyfully leave the result with God, confiding in his promise. Do your duty, and "hope that your child will be a Christian."

CONTRAST.

The principle of contrast is too seldom improved. This appears to be a prominent feature in that word which "is quick and powerful, sharper than a two-edged sword:" the life of sin and its appalling consequences on the one hand; the life of holiness with its cheering and peaceful possessions on the other. Let parents follow the example, and bring this principle more frequently into view. Pride may long affect to deny the difference, and refuse to make the self-application; but enlightened conscience may at length be goaded on to a decision. It is not always requisite to picture the transgressor's self. Show him sometimes his reverse, and sin will often defeat its own designs, by bringing out in glowing colors its affecting contrast. When a portrait of impiety has been in vain presented, and the truth is resisted or evaded, then show him what he should be, what he may be, but what he is not. It may suit his peculiar temper and excite inquiry, though not a word may have been said in personal condemnation. No one can describe to another his heart so well as himself can see it, provided he will but look; and this looking may be induced by means as various as the tempers of individuals. Says Cecil, that devoted man of God, "Parental influence hangs on the wheels of evil. I had a pious mother, who would talk to me, and weep as she talked. I flung out of the house with an oath, but wept too when I got into the street. Sympathy is the powerful engine of the mother."

KINDNESS AND AUTHORITY.

It is a difficult matter for any suitably to mingle kindness and authority in urging the claims of religion. In kindness there is danger of loose indifference, or at least the appearance of it; in authority, the parent fears producing formality, and perhaps disgust. Let him distinguish here between the feelings and the judgment of a child. The feelings may, by no means, be of that obstinately perverted character which the same inclinations would imply, were the judgment mature; and yet how many parents either *command* the performance of religious duties when *persuasion* would be sufficient, or on the other hand, improperly leave the decision entirely to the youthful judgment when authority is necessary! How many of the young, for ex-

ample, are just *requested* to attend the Sabbath-school. Nothing is felt of its importance by the child himself, and a little feeling of disrelish decides upon a step of perhaps immeasurable consequence to an immortal soul. With a well-educated child the decided *wish* of a parent will be equivalent to a command; and where it is not, the command should certainly be given and enforced. A child might be left to neglect public worship, the day-school, and every privilege, for want of parental decision, with just as much propriety as the benefit of a Sabbath-school.

YOUTHFUL DIFFICULTIES.

There will be with the young peculiar difficulties, and no less in the formation of religious character than in other things. These difficulties should be considered, and every proper means taken to remove them. It will not do to treat all the children even of one family alike in all things: a delicacy and discrimination are requisite, too often lost sight of in a hasty mode of family rule. The first movements of a religious cast are often extremely susceptible. They may be extinguished by a rough and unexpected treatment even of a Christian parent; or from a reserve frequently accompanying these impressions, they may remain without sympathy, because unknown. On the other hand, they may, by a gentle coöperation, in humble dependence on divine grace, be fanned into a pure, steady, and heavenward flame.

HOME MADE INTERESTING TO THE YOUNG.

Sufficient pains are not generally taken to make home interesting and pleasant to the young. Well has it been said, that children should feel convinced that they may be more *wicked* elsewhere, but that they cannot be more *happy*. If this conviction is strongly fixed at an early age, there will be little desire for the false excitements of distant pleasure. There is a restlessness at this age, which must receive a right direction, or it will infallibly take a wrong one. If not in some measure consulted and made happy at home, company will be sought abroad, and that almost of necessity of a corrupting tendency. A parent, therefore, who expects his son or daughter to grow up with warm domestic attachments, and to seek their enjoyments principally at home, must endeavor to render those enjoyments satisfying.

He must sympathize with his children in their little interests, and thus gain an influence which he may use for God. Instruction and amusement must, for this, be pleasantly and systematically introduced. Listen to your child when he speaks of his little troubles and joys, and he will listen to you when you speak of God and the Bible. Gain his ear, and you may then whisper the things which concern his everlasting peace. But it would be unnatural to expect him to give up the fascinations of extended intercourse for home, without any thing to fill the void.

MATERNAL CARE.

Man's life is his term of preparation for the scene beyond the grave; but it has been correctly observed, that practically considered, this season of preparation is in many cases over, long before the close of life. The chief hope of the parent lies before his child has attained the age of twenty; and a father has usually but little continued influence over his son after he is fifteen: even before this period the busy occupations of life leave the burden chiefly upon the mother, who can scarcely control an unruly spirit over ten or twelve. If, then, she would have her son a shining light in the regions of grace, she must think nothing of her ten years of labor and care for him, in comparison with the fearful loss to be avoided, and the more than worlds to be gained. O think how much one Christian mother does in training up for God some devoted servant—a Whitefield, a Scott, or a Chalmers—or who even gains over a Washington, or a Wilberforce, to the pure and disinterested love of his fellow-man! She sets at work a moral power which goes on accumulating for ever.

PATERNAL CARE.

But let the father of a growing family also remember, pressing as his business may be, that very much depends upon his devoting systematically some portion of his time to that instruction of his family which no money can procure. Let him by no means plead ignorance: if he begins in time, he can at least grow with his children in their attainments. He should remember that in a course of years a large family, brought up on sound and conscientious principles, will cost less than one child of expensive and

dissipated habits. He should remember also that his children have eternal interests, for which he is bound to consult. And when is the child to meet the parent in this search for goodly pearls, if the one is wholly occupied in school through the day, and the other in business through the evening?

HIRING CHILDREN TO BE GOOD.

There is an apparently trifling but very pernicious practice which often prevails, of hiring children to do their duty, especially when of that description which is plainly commanded by God. If you pay them for obeying you, for attending upon religious instruction, or performing any religious duty, you lay the foundation for an inveterate perversion of heart and character. Every worthy motive is thus shut out, and a low feeling of selfish barter introduced. The plan may be less questionable, when occasionally applied to encourage any system of industry, or perseverance, or self-denial not so obviously required by moral obligation; but the simple fact that God has commanded, should silence every selfish inclination, and be felt in all its singleness.

DISSIPATING AMUSEMENTS—VICE.

Too often parents and even professed Christians are found indulging their children in amusements inconsistent with the grand business of Christian education, and perhaps also in vices which destroy the sensibility of conscience. Hard indeed must it be for a parent to interpose his authority, when such habits have been formed through his own neglect, or want of judgment, or silent acquiescence. But it must be done, or the double sin will lie at his door. The affecting example of Eli speaks in solemn and awful tones of rebuke to all who, from any cause, indulge their offspring in any known immorality. "I will judge his house for ever for the iniquity which he knoweth, because his sons made themselves vile, and he restrained them not."

EDUCATION TO BE STUDIED AS A SYSTEM.

If any pursuit requires study and system, it is parental duty in the business of education; which, to be complete, requires the aid of religious principle from the foundation

to the topstone; and yet how remiss are parents on this point. After bringing forward the older children, perhaps with injury at every step, they begin to see the sad effects of errors in judgment, even where the best intentions may have existed. They now reverse the system, but too late; and, passing from one extreme to another, all is difficulty and anxiety. The elder pervert the younger; and the difference in plan adds perplexity to the whole scene. It is the part of wisdom to avail ourselves of the experience of others, and yet how hard to acknowledge that we need it! Otherwise, how is it that most lamentable mistakes in education, after having been often and clearly pointed out, are still followed in so many families, leading on to disappointment, disgrace, and ruin?

INSTANCES OF SUCCESS.—MODES OF ATTAINING IT.

To encourage parents in the religious education of their children, God has said, "Train up a child in the way he should go, and when he is old he will not depart from it." So far, then, as a parent fails in what he might perform, if rightly instructed in his work, he is accountable for the result, and for the prevalence of evil. And when there are striking instances of success, they should be published and examined by others, and the best modes of proceeding should be sought out, and adopted systematically by all around. A few plain books of direction should be in the hands of every intelligent parent. Take a family as an example: the facts can be vouched for. The parents of this family are of exemplary piety; the children (seven in number) all intelligent, well informed, and well educated, cheerful and active in the cause of their Redeemer, being all apparently of decided and winning piety. The five sons are in the ministry, or preparing for it. Is there nothing to be learned from such parents? Go one step further. Says the father of this family to a female friend, "To you, madam, we are largely indebted for our success." "How?" says the astonished acquaintance. "By lending us, many years since, a copy of the little work, Elementary Principles of Education." Now, although this work is by no means a sufficient guide in Christian education, yet its usefulness to these parents proves that all justifiable means are to be sought for gaining an influence over the young.

Let another case be added. The mother of that ardent little Christian, Mary Lothrop, whose simple biography has excited so strong an interest in every reader, was asked by a friend how she succeeded in cultivating the religious affections of her children, and fixing so deeply and so early such strong impressions of Christian obedience and faith. Her answer was full of interest and of sound philosophy, worthy the attention of parents, teachers, and even divines, and was to this effect: "I do not take the opportunity when *my own* heart is warm in devotion, but I seek the moments when *my children are interested and tender*, and then I lead them to duty and to God. I then labor, and then my labors are blessed."

PARENTAL MEETINGS—MATERNAL ASSOCIATIONS.

Valuable hints are to be gathered by interchange of thought and comparison of experience. It is not improbable, if we may judge from experiments already made, that social religious meetings may hereafter be conducted with a more distinct reference to classification, and connected with mutual instructions in the duties of life peculiar to each portion of a Christian community. The Sabbath-school is one step towards this. Maternal societies may be another; and we may hereafter find parents associated together to study out faithfully their responsibilities, and the way to meet them. Thus, vastly more energy, and prayer, and faith will be enlisted for securing the early conversion of children and youth.

WARNINGS TO PARENTS NOT PIOUS.

The foregoing remarks have been addressed principally to those personally interested in religion. But there are parents who feel that they are themselves destitute of piety, and yet are deeply concerned that their children should be brought up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord. They wish success to Sabbath-schools, and send their children. Their language practically is, "My beloved offspring, I feel the importance of piety, of seeking that peace which the world can neither give nor take away. To be safe, you must remember your Creator in the days of your youth, and walk in his ways, and give yourselves to his service. I advise you urgently to do this; but if you follow my advice—

and I trust you will—we must part, and perhaps for ever. You will be rising higher and higher towards the mansions of the just; you will be 'seeking for glory, honor, immortality;' 'eternal life' will be your reward; but I shall most likely go on. My habits are fixed, and the grave, I fear, will find me as I now am. I am moral, and kind to others; but I am too old to think now of turning heartily to God. I am not happy, and have no reason to think I ever shall be; but you may rejoice for ever." Strange, dreadful inconsistency! and yet how many parents take their children by the hand, and without giving them a single warning, lead them with all the force of example steadily onwards towards the grave, without God and without hope! O how immensely important, then, that parents should possess a living faith, and show the way; and by their own Christian character, by their unceasing instructions and prayers, set in full view before their youthful dependents the difficult but sure path of life, and glory, and immortal blessedness!

ENCOURAGEMENT FOR FAITHFUL PARENTS.

We may safely appeal to the experience of the Christian father and mother, to declare the joy they experienced when they have witnessed the blessing of God crowning their labors and prayers with success—when they have found Christ formed in the heart of their child—when the young immortal, owing its existence to them, has turned from an unsatisfying world to the service of the living God, and become a meek, self-denying, ardent follower of the Lamb. Upon all others the trial is now urgently pressed; they may expect their encouragements and rewards to be the same, if the work is undertaken in the same faith. And let every parent remember, that in whatever other ways the voice of God may speak, it should be heard with reverence, and obeyed.

If you are unfaithful, even undesignedly, when you might have known your duty, your offspring may be deprived, by your means, of the choicest blessings of heaven. Receive then instruction, and be wise: "There is joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner that repenteth." And if the repentance of even an aged wanderer, who has nothing to offer on his return but a worn-out self, can cause such

joy in the world of light, who but a parent can tell the rejoicings unspeakable that swell a parent's bosom, when that sinner is a beloved child, a child now willing to devote body and soul, free and vigorous, to the service of a Saviour, where every name before had fallen as an unmeaning sound upon the ear?

Parents, your Sabbath-school teachers have labored with you to secure these rejoicings, and to multiply the joys of the heavenly host; how faithfully, how successfully, will be known only in the great day of account. You are now called upon to coöperate more cordially with them; and may you be quickened and invigorated by the same assurance that animates them. *They that turn many to righteousness shall shine as the stars for ever and ever.*

WATCH AND PRAY.

My soul, be on thy guard,
Ten thousand foes arise,
And hosts of sins are pressing hard
To draw thee from the skies.

O watch, and fight, and pray;
The battle ne'er give o'er;
Renew it boldly every day,
And help divine implore.

Ne'er think the victory won,
Nor once at ease sit down:
Thy arduous work will not be done
Till thou hast got thy crown. Heath.

Date Due

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